

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR WILLIAM H. GLEYSTEEEN, JR.

Interviewed by: Thomas Stern

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IMPORTANT NOTES FROM THE CONTRIBUTOR:

1) Although Tom Stern, my colleague and interviewer, has only recorded a few of his questions to identify chronological periods of my service, he actually asked me endless questions at each session. All of them were thoughtfully prepared to stimulate my responses.

2) I must remind readers of this material that it represents my memory of events and points of view, not necessarily the final verdict of history. My memories need to be checked against those of other actors on the stage as well as against the extensive documentation for this period.

3) If readers wish to quote material from this "oral history" during my lifetime, I request that they ask my permission before doing so. In addition, I must remind users that they, not I, are responsible for making sure that the material quoted is considered unclassified under U.S. Government regulations. Commenting 20-50 years after the events, I am relatively confident I have disclosed no secrets, but the onus of making sure that I have not done so lies with users, not with me.

Q: I am delighted to have this opportunity to talk to my old boss. We appreciate greatly your willingness to participate in our Oral History project. Let me start with the usual question: What is your background - birth, early childhood, education, etc?

GLEYSTEEEN: Two obvious influence pushed me toward a Foreign Service career: being raised in Asia and having parents with a very international point of view.

I was born in Beijing (known to me as Peking), China in 1926 just before Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang briefly unified China. My parents were Presbyterian missionaries. While my father was an ordained minister and my mother was also very committed to her faith, they were professionals - school teachers, not evangelists. For a number of years my father was the principal of a large Chinese middle school for boys, which had a variety of self-help schemes permitting bright but indigent students to attend. My parents were great believers in the moral and practical virtues of physical labor for intellectuals, a concept alien to the Chinese scholar class in those days. Although it might have been better for me, I didn't attend the missionary school. Along with most other Americans I was sent to the Peking American School where I received an excellent education. Many of my fellow students were Chinese, but the teachers were American and the language of instruction was English.

I was in China at the time of Pearl Harbor. The Japanese controlled Beijing, having captured it in 1937, and we immediately fell under their control. After a relatively brief period of house arrest, we were released to remain within the city under rules that kept us apart from our Chinese acquaintances. About a year later we were sent to an internment camp in Wei Xian, Shandong - a fairly rugged experience. From there we were eventually repatriated to the U.S. - after a very long voyage on a Japanese troop ship to Goa, India and then the Gripsholm to New York by way of South Africa and Brazil.

After getting back to the States in December 1943, I went to Westtown Friends School in Pennsylvania for one term. Although I had missed most of my formal high school education, I had been tutored by superb teachers and Westtown was very generous in allowing me to graduate after one term. I was in the Navy for about two years first as a V-12 student and then as an enlisted man. After the war, I attended Yale, got a BA in 1949 and an MA in 1951 before going to work for the Department of State. During summers I worked as a laborer to supplement my meager financial resources at school. I was a merchant seaman in the summer of 1947, exposing me during that contentious year to the Taft-Hartley Act and the process of labor unions evicting communist elements within their ranks.

There are several ways my childhood experiences influenced my career choice. My parents were very dedicated to China, and I was taught that service to others - secular as well as religious - was very important. These values were drilled into me as they were into my brothers and sisters. China was a place that easily evoked sympathy in the late 1930s and 1940s. It was poor and economically backward, but the people were friendly, capable, and enjoyed a glorious tradition - even if the old society had collapsed.

I have especially strong memories about the period in the mid 1930s when I suddenly began to comprehend what my parents were telling me about Japanese aggression against China. I became very conscious of Chinese nationalism, which I experienced vicariously through my Chinese friends. Having learned after the event about the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, I was politically conscious and saw the devastation when Japan attacked China proper in 1937. At a young age I was convinced that the Chinese had been victimized by inexcusable Japanese actions.

Despite this powerfully negative view of Japanese behavior, I should note that I was exposed to a variety of Japanese during my childhood, both in China and Japan. We knew Japanese - particularly Christians - who were anti-military and anti-war. Some of them visited China from time to time and came to see us. The Japanese as a people were not demonized in my upbringing.

Two foreign institutions in Beijing fascinated me in my childhood - probably because of their privileged status. The first was a large detachment of U.S. Marines, frequently mounted on Mongolian ponies for parades or polo. These remnants of our colonial era were present during my whole childhood, and a residual force was still present at the time of Pearl Harbor. The second was the Foreign Service. My parents were acquainted with many of the American diplomats, and most diplomatic children attended our school. Their lives looked opulent compared to us poor missionary kids. Many Americans raised in China joined the Foreign Service or the Marines. Some did both. Along with my brothers and sisters I was indoctrinated with my parents' world view. My father and mother made a great point of discussing international issues with us around the lunch and dinner table. We talked about what Japan was doing to China, what Germany was doing in Europe, etc. My father went to Geneva in 1932 to observe the League of Nations debates on Japanese activities in Manchuria. Five years later he was very disturbed by events in Europe and sensed war was coming. In 1939 we traveled to Europe on the trans-Siberian railroad. Going through Stalin's Soviet Union was an ugly experience (involving NKVD harassment, scenes of soldiers with bayonets marching prisoners near the tracks, and other manifestations of a police state) that left a deep imprint on my psyche. We visited Germany, Holland, England, getting to the States one month before the Russo-German invasion of Poland.

By the time I went to Yale, I had pretty well decided that I wanted to get involved in something related to international affairs, particularly some activity that might benefit other human beings. Like many others of my age I was enthused by what sometimes seemed to be heroic efforts in the post-war period to construct international institutions, promote development, and (later) cope with Cold War threats. Yet, at this point in my life, I was not focused on the Foreign Service, and I was very depressed by events in East Asia. China was being torn apart by civil war. I had been brought up as a child with a rather benign view of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang revolution, so as a young man I was particularly discouraged and disappointed by Chiang's corruption and ineffectiveness. I had no romantic notions about the Communists. I saw their assumption of power through a Cold War prism, not the more objective manner of my later years. China seemed to be regressing from the goals that had energized my family. Elsewhere in Asia I was disgusted by the efforts of the British, French, and Dutch to reassert their colonial control.

My strong reaction to these events led me to abandon East Asian affairs. At Yale, I majored in European intellectual history and got my MA in international relations. I did not return to Asian issues until toward the end of graduate school. In the meantime, my older brother Culver had joined the Foreign Service. He had already had very interesting experiences that tempted me. I also met a number of Foreign Service officers in graduate school who impressed me by their caliber. I had a professor of international relations (and master of Pierson College at Yale where I lived), Arnold Wolfers, who was quite high on the Foreign Service. My parents looked favorably on the Foreign service. The Foreign Service and State Department enjoyed much prestige. However, no one lobbied me or put any pressure on me during my slow drift into the Foreign Service by way of the Civil Service.

After getting my MA from Yale, I was still undecided about the "next step." I had in mind a job at the Department of State or a fellowship to continue my graduate studies. When I naively asked Professor Wolfers to recommend me for both, he told me quite properly that he would endorse me for one or the other but not both. So I chose the State Department. I took and passed the Civil Service Junior Management Exam, a standard test in those days for entry level professional positions. But I was not bent on becoming a China or Asian specialist when I started work in 1951 as a Civil Service clerk typist, GS-3, in the Executive Secretariat, a temporary appointment to get me on the rolls - for a salary of less than \$3,000 a year!

Q: When did you start in the Department and what were your duties?

GLEYSTEN: I started in March 1951. I was still in my anti-Asia mood. Although I had relented a little bit by taking a refresher course in Chinese along with a number of Asian related courses at Yale, I was still leery of becoming a Chinese expert.

I had a friend in the Department who told me that there was a vacancy in the executive secretariat (S/S). I had also met with a number of people in INR, who seemed interested in me. So I had a few choices; the secretariat sounded quite interesting and in fact, my job did turn out to be interesting from the start.

I shared a small office with Richard Hennes, a friend who occasionally still drops in on Washington. Our job was to summarize key documents for quick reference. (I later found out that most of the material we were summarizing was destined for Acheson's archives.) We also summarized cables for the "Digest" that went to the president and the secretary every day. Our most awesome responsibility was to review drafts of foreign policy speeches to insure conformance with Administration policy. This function, which was created after Truman and Acheson decided to squelch some of the more free-wheeling appointees, at times put us in direct confrontation with very important people. Secretary Acheson supported us when the official in question went over our heads to complain. I greatly admired Acheson - more in those early years than later.

I might note that I had little Foreign Service executive or management training in my government career, with the possible exception of a year as a fellow at Harvard University and the DCM course toward the end of my assignment as DCM in Taipei. I just got thrown into the jobs. Of course, I learned on the job, but I think I should have been required to take a number of training courses.

After about a year of summarizing and speech clearance, I was put "on the line" in S/S, the equivalent in those days of today's Operations Center. By this time John Foster Dulles had replaced Acheson. I saw a great deal more of him than I had of Acheson, largely because I often went on trips with him.

The secretariat went through a number of evolutions. In the early 1950s, its basic function was to manage the paper flow to the seventh (actually fifth in my days) floor principals, starting with the secretary. Later, by stages, S/S became a 24-hour activity culminating in the elaborate Operations Center for dealing with crises. During the years in the early 1950s when I was on the line in S/S my main task was to review documents going to the secretary dealing with East Asia and with NSC activities. I kept sensitive files, and I attended most of the secretary's meetings with Walter Robertson and his staff as well as NSC-related discussions centered around Bob Bowie, director of policy planning, and the secretary. My impression is that S/S was probably more actively involved in the decision-making process at that time than during my later service. We were omni-present, although we rarely spoke up, unless there was a question about the files and records.

I still remember being annoyed by the length of some documents sent to the principals, despite repeated warnings that the principals would not have time to read them. I suspect the problem has become worse, not better, with modern technology. The time consuming, cumbersome forms of producing memoranda in early days encouraged some selectivity and care, while the computer and xerox seem to have helped proliferate both paper and players in policy making. Of course, my impression may be wrong. Bureaucracy has always been very wordy.

When I first started in S/S, Carl Humelsine was the executive secretary. Luke Battle was the special assistant to Acheson (followed by Rod O'Connor under Dulles). After Humelsine, came Walter Scott to whom I reported for the rest of my tour in S/S. Scott, who had been a colonel on Eisenhower's staff, was very good to me. He pushed me to do things that I didn't think I could; I survived and learned. Service with him was excellent training. In 1951, there were probably ten officers in S/S. By the time I left four years later, there were probably 25 or 30. Although I managed to graduate from it after a couple of years, I found that producing the daily telegram digest for the secretary and president was also good practice for later work. We had to go to work very early; there was no time or possibility of revising or amending our work; and we had to have a good typist who worked rapidly and accurately. On his first day as president, Eisenhower personally opened the envelope containing the digest and wanted to know why the hell the State Department was sending him "such a long paper" - i.e. four single spaced pages. That was the end of the president's digest, though a shorter product in big print was eventually developed for him.

Under Scott, our daily digests began to look very fancy - rather like the product of today's laser printers. It was on our leaders' desks by 8 a.m. It was horrible duty, but there was probably no better way to develop the skill of swiftly squeezing out the essence of a document in as few words as possible.

We worked in shifts - three or four weeks on early duty, three or four weeks on regular duty. The days for this summary work were long. In theory, if we reported for duty at 4 a.m., we were supposed to go home around 2 p.m., but we rarely did that. I think we worked about 14 hours each day.

Among my colleagues was Chris Van Hollen who later became an ambassador and whose son is now a Maryland senator. There were many others who later rose in the ranks. We had a mix of Foreign Service and Civil Service.

Duty in the secretariat was an eye opener, particularly for a newcomer. I liked it; I was young and enjoyed being fully engaged. I didn't mind the long hours. Also there was a general elan about foreign affairs at this time-the armistice negotiations in Korea, the Japanese peace treaty, the establishment of NATO, the unsuccessful attempt to establish the European Defense Community (EDC), etc. I went to Europe with Dulles for meetings on a number of these issues. I felt involved and that we and our allies were generally on the right path.

McCarthyism was an ugly disease that struck the country during my S/S days. Since my family had lived abroad, and specifically in China, I was in a category subject to suspicion. Furthermore, I was married to the daughter of O. Edmund Clubb, one of the prominent China officers pursued by McCarthy's witch hunt. Although Clubb was exonerated in the final analysis, the process destroyed his career and he resigned in disgust at a relatively young age. I also knew John Davies-through my brother Culver; I did not know Service, but had a high regard for him and most of the others.

There were also allegations against me. They were eventually dismissed very quickly but nevertheless caught me up in the dragnet cast by the State Department's zealous security office in Dulles's time. I found the whole McCarthy process deeply distasteful, to put it mildly. The casual assumption of personal complicity because certain American citizens dealt professionally with communists or focused on communist activities tore friends and families apart. The careers of many outstanding officers were ruined. Although I escaped damage, the McCarthy period was one of the most gruesome experiences I encountered. Even after these many years, I still become emotional and angry about it.

Let me expand a little on my personal experience. As I said, I was interrogated under klieg lights by our security office, primarily about any connections with communist that I might have formed during my China days. Interestingly enough, they chose not to question me extensively about Clubb. They had a fuzzy dossier on me - I was guilty of being born abroad, in China moreover, I was acquainted with a number of "suspicious" people, and I behaved strangely, for example reading the Communist "Daily Worker" newspaper in the Philadelphia Public Library. In fact, I had done so at the suggestion of a very conservative anti-communist professor for a "content analysis" paper required in his course at Yale. My brother Ted, who had once worked for the FBI, warned me about undertaking this project, predicting it would get me into a lot of trouble. And he was right. The dossier also noted my alleged sympathy for the communists during my Yale days. This was stimulated by a talk I gave to a U.S. Army reserve unit in New Haven while I was a graduate student. I made some disparaging comments about South Korean President Syngman Rhee, stating that when I first learned the Korean War had broken out I was not initially certain whether the provocation had come from the South or North, although it soon became obvious by the massive attack that North Korea was the aggressor. Some time later in a New Haven bar I ran into an army reserve officer who had been in the audience. Quite drunk and failing to recognize me as the speaker, he described to me the terrible talk I had given and branded it as pro-communist. Presumably, he reported that to Army intelligence which passed it on to the State Department's security apparatus. The most amusing accusation was that I had been the leader of a Chinese communist guerrilla unit during WW II. I pointed out that I would have been rather young for such activity.

These and other equally baseless allegations were left to fester in my dossier without analysis and then took on significance in the McCarthy period. I had been given security clearance in 1951 so that I could join the Department, and I also had no problems obtaining renewed clearance when I was "Wristonized" into the Foreign Service in 1954. But for some reason the allegations against me were given sufficient weight to bar me from a foreign assignment. In 1955, while I was awaiting assignment to the Chinese language school in Taiwan and wondering why the assignment was not finalized, I learned from my boss, Walter Scott, that it was my security dossier that kept me from being assigned overseas. I told Scott the clearance issue had to be resolved immediately or I would be forced to find other employment. He agreed with me. In fact, I was interrogated one afternoon and had my clearance 36 hours later.

Apart from my obvious personal revulsion, I think "McCarthyism" damaged the effectiveness of the Department of State more than most people realize. Many of the best China experts that the department had were either discharged or sidetracked into non- China related work. This deprived China affairs of some very smart, even brilliant people. Even worse, an aura of what today might be called "political correctness" permeated the department, resulting in caution of expression and considerable intellectual cowardice. For example, when I was assigned to our embassy in Taipei in 1956, I found the political section appalling. It was so conservative, so cautious, so wedded to the safe path, that its intellectual contribution to US policy making was almost nil. This was the most unfortunate legacy of the McCarthy era. Any bureaucracy finds it difficult to consider new approaches - much less take them - and when that is combined with fear you have an unthinking institution.

It wasn't all bad. I was able to speak my mind on the issue. My superiors didn't treat me as a pariah while I was under investigation. Dulles' views on the matter were quite different from mine but I was given increasing responsibilities under him. With the exception of Walter Robertson, who was a McCarthyite in gentleman's disguise, most of the assistant secretaries were, in my opinion, on the side of the angels. I especially remember Livingston Merchant in EUR, Henry Byroad in NEA and Bob Bowie in Policy Planning. Despite my distaste for Robertson in almost every respect, he had good deputies, including Alex Johnson. During my trips with the secretary, I had an opportunity to discuss the Department's condition with people like Merchant. They may not have agreed with my views entirely, but I found it reassuring that these people one level below the secretary were civilized.

As I recall, my first trip abroad, certainly my first trip to Asia, while in S/S was to a SEATO Ministerial meeting held in Bangkok - in 1953. The coordinator for this trip was Douglas MacArthur II - then the counselor of the department and later my ambassador in Japan. I had a friendly relationship with him; he was well connected and therefore was able to get things done. Although the conference was considered successful, I felt SEATO was founded on illusions. Later, I went to Europe with Secretary Dulles several times, primarily to NATO meetings in London and Paris. My longest trip was the Geneva conference in 1954 on Korea and Indochina. I stayed on in Geneva for more than two months and only left because things seemed stalemated; I missed the final action dividing Vietnam that took place a couple of weeks after my departure.

Dulles traveled with a rather small group of aides. He had two persons from the secretariat - one administrative officer and one substantive officer like myself. I was essentially the person responsible for assuring that the secretary saw all the important messages. I discovered during the Geneva conference, however, that there were critically important messages not shown to me - a system that I found troubling. In particular I was not aware of discussions with the British and French about possible air strikes and other measures to rescue the French at Dien Bien Phu. These were "back channel" messages involving Eisenhower's talks with prime ministers. I later came to appreciate the need for restrictions, but I was disheartened at the time, because I thought I was part of the inner team. My ignorance was brief; back in the department after I returned from Geneva I had access to almost everything as I assembled the record of the meetings.

In addition to the secretariat staff, Dulles would have Rod O'Connor, his personal assistant, and his secretary. The rest of the traveling group consisted of officers designated by the relevant assistant secretaries to accompany the secretary. The coordinator of the trip and a couple of his assistants would go in advance. Additional officers would go with the Secretary on his government plane; some would precede him-as I did-and others might follow as their expertise was required. It was not a huge operation.

In Geneva, I attended many sessions of the conference as I did at SEATO. I sometimes attended small meetings as the US note taker. That was not a normal function for a secretariat officer; I became involved by sheer happenstance.

I had an interesting reaction to Dulles. First of all, I had a slightly worshipful - probably somewhat excessive-view of Acheson that may have made me more severe than justified in my judgement of his successor. Secondly, my newspaper acquaintance with Dulles before he became secretary was of a man of baffling contradiction. While visiting Korea in 1950 before the outbreak of the Korean War he seemed to demonstrate commendable caution about the danger of South Korean provocative actions; yet he later appeared to have become a hawk in suggesting we use nuclear weapons to break the military stalemate. Whatever the facts, I worried that he was a hardliner. Lastly, Dulles' mannerisms were remarkably unattractive; he was not a polished figure like his brother Allen. John Foster was physically clumsy-he was tall and gangly; he was abrupt; he didn't pay much attention to his surroundings; he was very demanding of people.

So my first impression of Dulles was rather negative, the views of a fairly "liberal" anti-communist Democrat, working in a very Republican administration. But I generally measure people on how they perform and over time, and my opinion of Dulles rose measurably. Initially, I feared he was an adventurer; he sided with the military in several debates concerning the development and use of nuclear weapons. In the secretary's and deputy secretary's offices during meetings and phone conversations I listened to the arguments dealing with China; I was appalled. Bedell Smith, a fine soldier and good deputy also disappointed me by siding with Dulles. Fortunately, President Eisenhower had the sense to toss out an almost unanimous State and Defense recommendation to use nuclear weapons. This aspect of Dulles jolted me, but as time went on, my anxieties diminished.

I came to see Dulles as a very hard worker. He was not so ideological that he turned deaf ears to important information. He listened to people. Although it was not easy to see him, once you got to him, your views would get an airing. I think Dulles acted on a fairly broad spectrum of information and views. Periodically he would return to his menacing "Cold Warrior" style, but President Eisenhower seemed to balance that off very well. My opinion of Dulles was more favorable at the end of my tour than it was at beginning. Dulles barely recognized my presence; he was very impersonal to all. He knew I was a member of his outer staff and treated me decently. I dealt mostly with him through Rod O'Connor with whom I had a very good relationship.

I have one story - both amusing and disturbing - about my relationship to Dulles. During one of the off-shore island crises with China - before the well known Chinmen and Matsu crisis in 1958 - the PRC (The People's Republic of China) and Nationalist Chinese had been exchanging artillery fire back and forth in some small islands in the Taiwan Straits, the Da Chen islands, as I recall. We intervened, moving Seventh Fleet ships to the vicinity to deter the mainlanders and eventually evacuate the Nationalists. In the process we demanded the Nationalists cease firing unless fired on. A truce of sorts developed after tough negotiations with President Chiang Kai-shek. I was following the crisis closely. While Dulles was in Europe, the Nationalists resumed shelling and the Communists responded, so that we had renewed hostilities - although at a relatively low level. In a meeting with the assistant secretaries in preparation for an NSC meeting, Dulles asked Robertson whether the truce had held. Robertson assured him that the Nationalists had behaved. In the back benches I created a stir by letting everyone know Robertson was wrong. I think it was Bowie who urged me to speak up. In any event I finally raised my hand - very much like a school boy. Dulles recognized me and I disputed Robertson's answer, giving the facts, which were in a memorandum already sent to the secretary. Robertson was furious and when I stuck to my guns mentioning the memorandum, Dulles asked O'Connor to check, which he did promptly and confirmed my account. Dulles grumbled an acknowledgment. Bowie, Byroad and Merchant were amused, while Robertson was fit to be tied. The issue was not a minor one since several admirals were in favor of using nuclear weapons against the Chinese. I was baffled by Robertson's behavior. He was too involved to have been ignorant; he wasn't stupid. He must have been suffering from a powerful compulsion to protect his pals in Taipei. O'Connor told me I was lucky to have been right and laughed; Robertson did not talk to me for a month; but my good relationships with his staff in EA continued without noticeable damage.

My attendance at the SEATO ministerial and Geneva meetings generated some prejudices in me about international conferences, reinforced perhaps by my second-hand observation of the negotiations for the Korean War armistice, the peace and security treaties with Japan as well our treaties with Taiwan and Korea. International conferences with their opportunities for high level contact were more important in the 1950s and 1960s than they are today when there are so many venues for personal contact. Now, international conferences are a debased currency. In my time in the secretariat, high level international meetings were rather rare and therefore targeted on critically important matters. Now, they are routine, often very large and frequently frivolous. Their cumbersome size was a drawback in those days, and remains so today.

I found conference preparations very tedious. I was quite cynical about the amount of paper produced by the bureaus and offices; that was particularly true for the Geneva conference where in my S/S capacity I had to read every paper from beginning to end. I knew that the Secretary and his senior assistants would never read most of these documents. Many were not worth reading; quite a few were prepared to fill arbitrary briefing book requirements. Even with all this paper flow, there was not enough attention paid to contingency situations which, for example, dominated at Geneva. Some important papers on critical policy issues were warped by the kind of ideological posturing that obstructed communication with our adversaries. The extremes of these papers were reflected in Dulles' refusal to shake the hand Zhou Enlai extended to him or to communicate directly with the Chinese. Not only did we demonize the Chinese to our own disadvantage but we also complicated our dealings with the Soviets. Today, of course, we have better means of communicating with both countries, but we still like to demonize our adversaries.

My tour in S/S left a strong impression on me; not only was I privy to the decision making process but there was a kind of excitement - for example, the chance to see people like Churchill as well as large numbers of foreign leaders. Nevertheless, much of the activity was highly frustrating. There were many failures. The Geneva conference in essence failed in both Korea and Indochina. A lot of the NATO meetings were non-productive, even while the organization grew. Efforts to create a European Defense Community as a means of bonding Germany into Europe failed, because of a succession of weak French governments. SEATO was a doubtful proposition from its very birth.

In addition to the secretary, S/S served the deputy secretary (then known as the under secretary), and the under secretary for political affairs. S/S may have also provided support for the economic under secretary, but my brief did not cover economic issues. I saw Bedell Smith quite often, particularly before, during, and after the Geneva conference. Again friendship with a special assistant facilitated the process. I had a very high regard for Smith, in part because he was qualified and willing to stand up to Dulles. I watched Robert Murphy from afar in meetings. He occasionally would ask me something, but all three principals treated me like the publisher of a very useful publication. They knew that I was very familiar with documents; I could be counted on for information. But they never asked me for advice or my views, with very few exceptions. When the director and deputy of S/S were away, we had a system of rotating their responsibilities among the more senior S/S officers, involving more direct contact with our principal. We had no night shift, but we had 24 hour coverage of cables; if something urgent popped up, the communicator was supposed to call the home of the designated S/S officer who had to decide what to do next. We occasionally decided to come down to the department to read the message.

After four years in S/S, having watched the foreign policy process, both as a participant and an observer, I was impressed first by the degree to which the president dominated the process in the 1950s. Once he made a decision, the system reacted quickly. Both Truman and Eisenhower were decisive. And that seemed true of their staffs as well.

Secondly, I had a feeling that the executive branch, for the most part, was filled with well qualified, capable and in many cases, admirable people. Of course, the law of averages necessitated that there be some fools in the ranks. While responsible for speech clearance, I met a number of them, particularly the military service secretaries. But most of the people for whom I cleared speeches, were sensible. Overall, I had a favorable impression of the bureaucracy, which I am less certain of today.

Thirdly, Congress was more coherent then it is today. It was more dependent on the president and its own leadership - in both parties. I saw different kinds of Congresses, but I saw a Democratic president working with a Republican Congress and vice-versa. I came to appreciate the importance of Senate and House leadership. Their support was crucial - unlike today with authority dispersed through so many committees and sub-committees. That leadership was also very decisive. If you had a president who could make decisions and who had the ability to convince the congressional leadership, the main remaining task was to convince the public. I thought this top-down approach was the way a democracy should work. Today I sense a dispersal of power and greater degree of populism. Presidents fail to shape policies with the clarity that I saw in the 1950s. Congress has acquired far more power and is all over the place with agendas set by ambitious staffers. Bureaucrats seem to have more hidden personal agendas and less interest in the "better good" for the nation.

I recognize I am not being entirely fair in this judgment; it is not a clear cut issue; it is often just a matter of shading. However, today's atmosphere makes me pessimistic about our ability to solve some of today's major issues. Clinton, in my mind, has carried public speech to such a level that it is almost meaningless. In the 1950s, there were relatively very few speeches on foreign policy; when they were given, they tended to be important - to announce new policies or prepare the public for new initiatives. They were meaningful to the public and the bureaucracy. Now, they are commonplace and boring.

In general, I had few situations in S/S where required information was not available to me. At that time I didn't handle certain categories of classified material-e.g. nuclear - because I didn't have the appropriate clearances. I accepted that. I knew that department leadership was getting the very sensitive material-I saw them receiving it and I could tell whence it came. That didn't bother me and I did not think that such compartmentalization impeded the decision making process.

Sometimes, we had a problem when not all of the involved people had access to conventional sources of information. S/S, in those days, was a prestigious organization; we used the Secretary's authority to force a bureau to share its information with other bureaus, as appropriate. For example, EUR officers not infrequently discussed the future of Vietnam with the French without letting EA know. That could affect policy making, because EUR tended to be more sympathetic than EA about European efforts to reassert control over their former colonies in Asia and Africa - in my opinion, to the great detriment of the US. The Department in the 1950s was still very Euro-centric. Would the participation of EA have prevented the catastrophes? Probably not, but it might have helped if EA had known about certain nefarious activities earlier. This fault in the system also deprived the Secretary of obtaining views from a broader range of advisors.

I must say that the bureaus were often annoyed with us and sometimes complained bitterly. But we were almost always supported by our principals. We could not stop reports that did not require clearances or activities that did not involve the secretary and the under secretaries - nor should that have been in our charter. We were right, however, to struggle against compartmentalization that threatened to warp our policy decisions.

In conclusion, I thought that the S/S staff was a group of good people. I was the only one who later (much later) ended up in EA. I respected their qualifications and personalities. I thought that the system worked rather well. It went through a lot of reinventing of the wheel. Our operations were studied, sometimes by outside experts. We were reorganized twice during my four years. We in fact were moving quickly towards what S/S is today, which in retrospect, was a wise move. I think our standing in the department was higher in the 1950s than it is today, in part because the department was much smaller. There were fewer assistant secretaries and a more collegial atmosphere. For me, as a newcomer to government, it was an extraordinary experience. I was very lucky. The opportunity to be a "fly on the wall" of the bosses was priceless.

Q: In 1955, you were assigned to the language school in Taipei. How did it come about?

GLEYSTEN: I was "Wristonized" in 1954-55. I was not unhappy by the prospects of joining the Foreign Service. In fact, the process went very smoothly. I worried that some Foreign Service officers might resent my joining the ranks by way of the Civil Service, but I came across no apparent animosity. In the long run, I don't think Wristonization of civil servants hurt the officers who entered the Service through the regular examination process. I transferred at about the same pay level as in the Civil Service: GS-11 to FSO-5 (later reclassified to FS0-7).

About the same time I saw an advertisement seeking applications from officers who were interested in becoming Chinese language officers through a difficult languages program. I put my name in, and I soon found myself in the first class of the Chinese language school that had just resumed operations in Taichung, Taiwan, having been dormant from the time the Communists captured Beijing in 1949.

I spoke ordinary Chinese quite fluently, but I was only semi-literate. While I knew some characters, I could not read a newspaper or a novel. I had grown up bilingual in English and spoken Chinese and this enabled me to cover the full language course in about one year, less than half the time that a non-Chinese speaker would have taken. I graduated with a high rating-good enough to interpret informally in both directions.

There must have been seven or eight of us at the Chinese language school. Over half were from the Foreign Service; the others belonged to other agencies-USIA, CIA, and Defense. We had to work in makeshift quarters in a rented house. My classroom was a kitchen; there was no furniture so that we sat on the floor until simple furniture finally arrived. By the time I left, the school had appropriate class rooms and adequate furnishings.

There was a lot of comradery among us. We studied hard for long days for many weeks. Then we would on occasion indulge ourselves - sometimes at a resort and some of us drinking too much. That cemented friendships. We had close relations with our teachers; we lived as a small community. Among my colleagues-most of them married-in the first class were Paul Popple (deceased), Bill Thomas, Paul Kreisberg (deceased), Harold Champeau, Frank Burnett, Jim Elliot, and Randy Raven. David Dean arrived about the time I left. Most of them were newcomers to Chinese language. In general, I think the course was very good. FSI did a first class job in reopening that language school. I well remember how hard I worked-sixteen hours each day. I wanted to raise my level of comprehension so I would be able to navigate well in Chinese, and I wanted that done sooner rather than later. The extra hours helped me graduate after the first year. If I had not spoken the language as a child and if I had not had brushed up at Yale, I would have had a much more difficult time.

The faculty was locally hired. Nicholas Bodman was the first head of the school. He was an established linguist -although with little knowledge of Chinese and somewhat impractical. Despite some criticism of his performance and lots of practical problems, he successfully managed to revive the school. He was replaced by Gerald Cox.

I learned Mandarin which is the Chinese dialect that we generally use in our discussions and negotiations. I think we were pig-headed in limiting ourselves to Mandarin, largely because that was what our teachers thought we should be taught. It suited me, of course, because Mandarin was the dialect I learned as a boy, and it was the national language in both the PRC and Taiwan. But the reality is that dialects are used extensively in both places. It would have been very useful to have officers fluent-or close to it-in both dialects. It would have helped me in both my first and second tours on Taiwan - even though it might have resulted in a greater emphasis on the China area in my future career. I recognize practical limitations, particularly finding the extra time to study a dialect.

At the end of my training I was assigned to the Political Section in Embassy Taipei. The political counselor, Paul Meyer, invited me and my wife to Taipei for an interview and dinner. He was a friend of my wife's family, having been a colleague of Edmund Clubb. After a very pleasant evening with the Meyers, I learned a few weeks later that he arranged with the ambassador to have me shifted to the consular section, because he decided my views were out of line with embassy thinking. Indeed, they were! So I was shuffled off to the consular section without training, reporting to a wonderful, almost always drunken consular veteran who gave me an abbreviated version of the consular course.

I spent six months in the consular Section. I never regretted the assignment; it was good experience. I was a bit disappointed about being diverted from the political Section, but I thought officers should have broad experience in their younger years, including consular work. I learned a lot in the consular section - how to issue visas, how to interview people, the complications of immigration issues, etc.. There were just two officers in the section, so that my exposure to the various aspects of consular work was quite wide. I also was able to use my language skills quite frequently-much more than if I had been in any other section of the embassy. I usually did my own interviews without the help of a translator.

While in the consular section, I worked on both non-immigrant and immigrant visas as well as services to Americans - including protection and passports. In the mid-1950s, Congress authorized a vast increase in the Chinese immigrant quota. The new law allowed people who were refugees from the mainland, who could make a case, to immigrate to the US along with their families. Most of these people were in Hong Kong, but there were also some in Taiwan. A special consular section staffed by State and INS was established in a different building to handle this work-load. By the time I got to Taipei this special program was coming to an end. The residual work fell to the consular section, giving me some exposure to many of the applicants. Some, like Anna Chennault, struck me as hardly fitting the definition of refugee. I didn't have much sympathy for them. Incidentally, Chennault later managed to wangle a visa from someone else.

I refused quite a few applications, both for immigrant and non-immigrant visas. I was reversed in a few cases by the DCM, James Pilcher. I told him it was not his business, and I made sure that he, rather than I, signed such visas and that his action was noted in the files. All of those cases were matters of political favoritism - a not uncommon practice. My genial boss was more willing to bend than I. In the process I learned a negative lesson, and throughout my career I tried not to pressure decisions by consular officers.

My first ambassador was Karl Rankin. He was succeeded by Everett F. Drumright in 1958. The DCM for my whole tour was Jimmy Pilcher, who just died recently. He knew little about substance but had considerable experience as a senior consular officer, including a feel for management. He had served in China, but was not a language officer; I felt his principal agenda was to get along with people, especially the ambassador and the Chinese in Chiang Kai-shek's regime. Rankin was a newcomer to the Chinese scene who had distinguished himself in emergency relief activities and Cold War operations in Greece. He became our ambassador at the peak of our confrontation with the PRC, and he was very ideological about Communists - Greek or Chinese, they were all the same to him. Pilcher echoed him.

Drumright, on the other hand, was a China expert, a language officer with several tours in China. He had been DCM in Korea during the Korean war and had held a number of senior positions in EA area. Although liked personally by most of his colleagues from China days, some thought he was over his head as ambassador. I don't entirely share their uncharitable view, after seeing the variety of characters appointed to ambassadorial positions. Drumright may not have been brilliant, but he was an improvement over Rankin; he had a better grasp of the Chinese situation and reality. He was only slightly more moderate.

About this time I was promoted on the basis on my performance at the language school-a rare occurrence designed to encourage study of difficult languages. I was surprised and delighted but it made me senior to my boss. To solve that problem I was moved to the economic section, which might have happened in any case. Joe Yager, a strong officer and friend, was the economic counselor for the major part of my two year plus tour. He later succeeded Pilcher as DCM.

I had only been exposed to basic economics at Yale. That was not much of a hindrance. My job didn't require fancy training. Essentially, I took care of issues that did not fall clearly within the responsibilities of the other officers. I was responsible for agriculture, which turned out to be a very important function because the Nationalist government had reorganized itself on retreating to Taiwan, making land reform and agricultural development show cases for aid purposes. These efforts were managed by the Joint Commission for Rural Reform (JCRR), which was one of my liaison responsibilities. I got to know certain officials of this agency well. The present president of Taiwan, Lee Teng-hui, was an agronomist and deputy secretary general of the organization, which was a joint American-Chinese enterprise; its commissioners represented both countries, although by the time I started my job Americans were being phased out.

I attended the commission's staff meetings. The secretary general was a member of the Kuomintang Central Committee. My language comprehension came in handy. There were occasions when the Chinese commissioners and staff would argue in Chinese sometimes in order to shut out the Americans present - the commissioner, the head of US AID, etc. I could follow the debate, which often proved to be quite interesting. I reported what I had heard to both my boss and the political section.

I shared the commercial work with another officer. During my last year, Yager allowed me to work on specific projects. I wrote a big report on the forest industry in Taiwan. I had the benefit of very important help from one of our forestry experts and others in AID. My analysis showed that the very expensive assistance we were providing to the forestry industry was being used to sustain a badly run government monopoly designed to keep prices high as a source of revenue with little regard to forest regeneration. Soon thereafter, our assistance was terminated. I was told my report played a role.

Although Drumright was willing to listen to different views, he was unquestionably a hardliner. To make matter worse, we lacked challenging minds in the upper echelons of the embassy's political structure. Paul Meyer, the political counselor was not qualified for his important position even though he was a Chinese language officer and had served in China. Whether from conviction or because he thought his bosses would applaud his views, he was an unimaginative, unmitigated Cold Warrior who literally censored all attempts to criticize Chiang's regime or deal objectively with Communist China. He had some good political officers under him, whom he kept bottled up doing routine chores. With Joe Yager's collusion, I cheated a little bit to compensate for Meyer. I inserted a good deal of political analysis into the economic section's weekly and monthly reporting. There were occasions when we got bleats from Meyer, because we didn't clear our messages with him. While it was unfortunate we had to resort to this, I felt we were justified in what we did, given the special circumstances. In any event, I'm glad I never served under Meyer.

Part of the staffing problem in China posts was scarcity. A generation of Chinese experts had been decimated by McCarthy; it was not until the next generation came along in the sixties that the Department had an adequate China corps. The other part of the problem was that even though there may have been considerable talent in the pool, the poison associated with China kept many good people away. There were not many volunteers for China assignments. I decided to run the risks of an assignment to Taipei. In fact, I relished the work, and as far as I could tell, it never interfered with my career.

Most controversy about Taiwan centered around assessment of the facts and the almost verboten subject of diplomatic relations with the PRC. Assessment of the facts was complicated by more than the divide between communists and anti-communists. The Chinese population on Taiwan was not of one mind. In the first place, there were two Chinese populations on the island. There was the huge majority descended from immigrants who arrived two or three centuries earlier. Known as Taiwanese or "native" people, they were bitterly resentful about the way the Nationalist Chinese had treated them after the Japanese surrender. There were good grounds for that feeling; the Nationalists had been thoughtless, cruel and terribly corrupt. When these unsavory practices were partially exposed by public protest, it caused a drastic crackdown in 1947 involving massacres of thousands of people. So there was a bitterness that you could sense readily in native constituencies. These people wanted development of Taiwan, not a hopeless and costly effort to recapture of the mainland.

The second group of Chinese - about fifteen per cent of the population - were recent arrivals after the collapse of the Nationalist regime on the mainland. Among them were "good" guys and "bad" guys. The most senior "bad guy" was Chiang Kai-shek himself, but there were many others. Even his son Chiang Ching-kuo, who later became one of my heroes, was at that time associated with ugly activities, including police brutality. Although this group was split between reformers, conservatives, and reactionaries, the latter dominated, and naturally most of the group tended to be mainland-oriented.

The Embassy reported these facts, usually with some bias in favor of the controlling regime. I don't think much fault could be found with our reporting on how the Nationalists maintained their control or about the splits within the Chinese community on Taiwan. The contest between groups came through pretty clearly in our reporting. However, the embassy usually short changed the concerns of the Taiwanese and gave excessive weight to the Nationalist point of view. Spiritually, it was defensive of Chiang and his regime. That was a source of friction for me at all times.

Both Chinese communities on Taiwan viewed us favorably. Both had high expectations about US actions: the Taiwanese - and Nationalist reformers - hoped that we would side with them and ease the repression. The ruling Nationalists wanted us to let them go on as in the past; i.e., supporting their attacks against China, minimizing complaints about their heavy handed rule, maximizing our aid, and boycotting significant contact with prominent Taiwanese natives or other opposition groups. During my first tour on Taiwan, the Nationalists were still talking semi-seriously about returning to the mainland.

I want to add a word about views in Taiwan toward the mainland. Those who were hoping for a return to China proper were members of the Nationalist military and civilian establishment who had fled with Chiang Kai-shek to Taiwan in 1949. The older these people, the more they wanted to return. Over time, a new generation began to participate in policy making and they were not nearly as interested in return to the mainland as their fathers and mothers. I noticed the beginning of this fundamental change during my first tour.

The embassy under Rankin and to a lesser extent Drumright sided with the older generation Nationalists, favoring intelligence and para-military cooperation with them against the PRC. The embassy leadership and the Washington establishment clung to hope that the Communist regime on the mainland would collapse, somehow allowing the Nationalists to return home. People like Walter Robertson, Rankin, and Drumright didn't know the new generation. They had a skewed image of Taiwan.

Although the Kuomintang and the Nationalist government continued to conduct a number of small operations against the mainland, as time went on, there was less and less support for this activity, especially among the younger generation of mainlanders who tended to think a return to the mainland was a pipe dream. Some of them shared the Taiwanese view that provocative activities by the Nationalists might well back-fire with an armed response from the Communists. In the 1950s, these young people did not yet constitute an alternative to the old guard.

Along with a few other young officers, I sympathized with this emerging group of mainlanders. I believe we conveyed some sense of its importance to our conservative superiors in Washington. While this group downplayed its differences with its parents, its focus was firmly on Taiwan - and how to make it a better place to live - rather than the mainland. Members typically believed that if their stewardship of Taiwan was successful, then perhaps their chances of returning to the mainland would be increased.

As part of their approach, the younger leaders recognized the need to entice elements of the Taiwanese population into collaboration, slowly bringing that majority of the people into the government, army officer corps, Kuomintang, and the policy making apparatus. In a muffled but radical break from his father's failed policies, Chiang Ching-kuo became the leader of co-option. Of course, even in this new group there was a nostalgia for China, but the new generation were far more realistic about what could be achieved in the foreseeable future.

In a political sense, the vast majority of Taiwanese were disinterested in, or actually opposed to, the idea of a military return to the mainland. Their opposition seemed more a matter of self-preservation than ideology. They didn't want to be destroyed by a Nationalist pursuit of a lost cause. They didn't want to be the soldiers giving their lives for someone else's foolish dream. Incidentally, by the late 1950s Taiwanese were a majority in the army. Virtually all the soldiers on the off-shore islands were Taiwanese. So there was real significance to this tension about a return to the mainland. In the 1950s the idea of Taiwan "independence" from "China" was not yet a red hot topic, but it was nurtured in certain parts of Taiwan, especially in the city of Tainan. Its subsequent spread came as a reaction to the old Nationalist policies, to the development of opposition politics, and to the long physical separation of the island from the mainland. The most extreme proponent of independence in those days was Peng Ming Min, who recently ran unsuccessfully in Taiwan's first democratic presidential election. Peng's group emphasized the cultural and historical differences between the Taiwanese and the mainland Chinese and urged the establishment of a "Republic of Formosa." These views were fairly popular in Japan, especially in former colonial circles. Peng was allowed to enter the United States where a substantial independence community also emerged. Taiwan "independence" was an anathema to me, an arbitrary action sure to complicate problems on both sides of the Taiwan Straits.

In May 1957 we were stunned by an astonishing event in Taipei. The Chinese authorities allowed, or did not prevent, a mob to attack and completely trash the Embassy chancery. At a time of maximum conformation with the PRC, this was hardly what we expected in the capital of our great anti-communist ally. The precipitating event was an American soldier's killing of a Chinese whom he claimed was a "Peeping Tom." The victim, Liu Tze-jan, may have been peeping into the bathroom window but he was also a Chinese intelligence operative, possibly engaged in a black market operation. The American, a master sergeant named Reynolds, was court-martialed. Charged only with one count of murder, he was found not guilty by the American army tribunal. A civilian court might have reached the same conclusion on murder but would have permitted conviction for a lesser offense. All Chinese deeply resented this outcome, particularly when they learned that the court had erupted into loud applause on hearing the "not guilty" verdict and that our military had whisked the soldier out of Taiwan.

Following the court-martial, the embassy was subjected to well organized demonstrations - obviously government approved, if not actually sponsored, since some of the demonstrators were members of the government youth league. Normally, no demonstrations took place in Taiwan; anyone who did so risked his or her life. We were of course concerned and kept asking the authorities to clear the streets. Instead, the demonstrations went on and on, with some participants coming from an unruly neighborhood near the embassy populated with discontented Nationalist ex-soldiers. Also nearby was a community of very poor Taiwanese - slums. Rioting began over the lunch hour when the embassy was normally closed leaving just a skeleton staff-marines, communicators, and a few others in the building. The lunch hour was also the time the demonstrators put on the day's special show of anger. On this occasion zealots tried to lower the American flag and the ensuing struggle raised the crowd's fervor. People, led by a vanguard that seemed experienced, then forced their way into the chancery, smashing everything. In my office, for example, they smashed open the safe and totally destroyed my desk, even unwinding the coils in my telephone. Far more serious, they broke into the communications area breaking open all the classified cabinets and ripping out all equipment, including encryption devices, dumping everything all over the place. After several hours, they found and attacked the eight or nine Americans hiding in the vault under the protection of our Chinese staff. This included the marine guard who was disarmed by a courier, himself an ex-marine who had the wits to prevent another killing.

By late afternoon the embassy was demolished. As far as we could tell, nothing was stolen, but we couldn't be sure about our documents and considered everything compromised. Fortunately, none of our American or Chinese staff was killed. There were several injuries - Meyer got brutally hit over the head with a hammer and was never the same again. The marine guard and the courier who disarmed him were badly beaten.

While the riot was in progress, DCM Pilcher made several efforts to get in touch with President Chiang Kai-shek. He couldn't be reached because he was "taking his usual walk"; Chiang Ching-kuo, was similarly unavailable. The foreign minister seemed to do his best to get in touch with the military, but nothing ever happened until too late. Eventually, the military deployed hundreds of military police, but never in sufficient numbers to stop the rioters. Late in the day, the demonstrating crowd became increasingly Taiwanese as the riot spread beyond the embassy, particularly to police stations where demonstrators were being detained. By early evening, things were so out of control that the government declared martial law and brought in two army divisions with tanks and truck-mounted machine guns to stop the struggle. Perhaps more than a hundred demonstrators - mostly Taiwanese - were killed. The episode was a humiliating embarrassment to the government.

Inexperience led to some lapses in my own behavior. I was not in the chancery when the riot broke out. When I left for lunch, the atmosphere was tense, but there was no sign of what would happen. Having lunched at my house with the director of the language school in Taichung and dropped him off at the rail station, I noticed a boisterous crowd as I approached the embassy. As a precaution, I left my car outside and tried to walk in the gates, but I was warned away. I tried every other access was known to me, going to the defense attache's office - which had no idea what was going on - and then to the USIA headquarters, where I picked up some intelligence about what was going on, and stayed there until we evacuated just before the mob sacked that building.

The ambassador was in Hong Kong leaving Pilcher in charge. My own mistake was not to report to Pilcher who had set up a make-shift office in his house. I had tried hard to call the senior officers without success, and I also assumed the USIA people would have passed on word that I had been with them. After leaving them I found my car and drove home, because I was very concerned about spreading chaos affecting my family - my wife and recently born baby. So I became one of the "missing" for a couple of hours until I was finally able to get through on the phone to my boss that night. His comments taught me a lesson.

I am not aware of any definitive US analysis of this extraordinary event. It was very apparent to us in 1957 that the Nationalists in Taiwan were competing fiercely for China's national mantle with a PRC that was vaunting its role as China's new national sovereign. Without the prosperity that later mollified them, it was also clear that the indigenous population in Taipei, especially the poorer people, was disaffected from the ruling authorities. Nationalism and discontent were surely the basic ingredients for the riots. In addition, there were obvious misjudgements - on our side for letting the sergeant go unpunished and on the government's side for allowing the demonstrations to go on when they knew that tempers were running so high.

I accompanied the ambassador when he formally protested the incident to Vice President Chen Cheng who conveniently substituted for the elusive Chiang Kai Shek. Chen, a former general widely admired for the way he cleaned up the brutality and corruption in Taiwan in 1949, apologized and seemed genuinely shocked by what had happened. But neither he nor other leaders provided us many clues. My own speculation was that the Nationalist authorities, faced with both strong competition from the PRC and their own angry countrymen in Taipei, decided to give us a real scare by permitting demonstrations that they cockily assumed they could control. When they finally realized things were getting out of control, they repeatedly miscalculated the amount of counter force necessary, perhaps because commanders were loathe to admit they had lost control.

My explanation did not demonize the Nationalist regime. Coming from a person not known to be enamored of President Chiang, I thought it would appeal to Rankin and Pilcher. Instead, these gentlemen briefly lost their cool about the Generalissimo, accusing him of authorizing a deliberate strike at the embassy by intelligence forces trying to break into our secrets. I rather enjoyed defending the president and his son whom I considered too smart to run such risks against their foreign protector. After a few weeks Rankin and Pilcher resumed their praise of Chiang as a leader of the Free World, and I was also back to my normally critical stance.

Washington was furious about the mob's actions in Taipei - as it should have been. In Taiwan, the story was suppressed, but the regime was chastened. It really bent over backwards to make amends, completely rebuilding the Chancery using its own resources. Washington sent people to help us with the clean up. One of our main tasks was to sort through the material strewn on the floors of the chancery. We decided to burn most of it. Given my S/S experience, I was one of the better trained persons to assess the importance of documents. My impression was that we were not seriously compromised by the mob's actions - although there really was no way to check that impression.

While this was going on, we surveyed all Americans on the island to be sure they were okay and found temporary office space in NAMRU (the Naval Auxiliary Research Unit), an American medical organization. Our move was simplified by having nothing much to take with us. Virtually no equipment escaped destruction. For about six months we had to make do with borrowed furnishings and gradually acquired replacement equipment such as typewriters and communications gear. Although we had our marines, there was no way the temporary building could be made secure; we had to begin from scratch with our files; although we had a few miscellaneous safes that had not been broken into. My memory of our months in those temporary quarters is a real blur.

As I reflect back now on those days in the late 1950s, I would fault the embassy and its mentors in Washington for complacency. We were overly optimistic about Taiwan's alliance and attitude towards us. We did not fully appreciate the agenda of Chiang Kai-shek and his cohorts in the control apparatus. In the intelligence area and military assistance we tended to assume that there was a higher degree of commonality of interests than in fact existed. Of course, we had a shared interest in defending Taiwan from invasion. We also came to share a common interest in the political stability of Taiwan and its economic development.

Ultimately, our government was not prepared to give Chiang Kai-shek a carte blanche, largely because we did not want to risk the dangerous kind of crisis that broke out a year later over the Chinmen-Matsu offshore islands. Yet the behavior of our officials, especially intelligence officers, kept the Nationalists ever hopeful that in one way or another we could be brought to support all of their activities. In sharp contrast to the situation during my second Taiwan tour, our intelligence officials in the 1950s often lacked a nuanced understanding of our policy or pushed it to its limits. They seemed too ready to accept the analysis and information provided by the Nationalist services - after all, they were originally in the same business with the same lingo and aliases during the Korean War period. To make matters worse, by 1958 the CIA Station in Taiwan began dominate the embassy in dealings with the Nationalists - both in reality and appearance. As a result I suspect we were parties to a number of operations against the PRC that should have been squashed by a strong ambassador. Many of these adventures took place in or through Hong Kong, which complicated our relations with the British.

As for the question of responsibility for the embassy's trashing, I think Ambassador Rankin should have pushed harder and longer for a personal explanation from President Chiang - less for what he might say than to register our deep anger with his behavior as an ally. If we had been more forceful and persistent with Chiang Kai-shek, we should have coupled it with some parallel action against the sergeant, whose trigger happy finger started the whole mess. On the later issue, I was in sympathy with the Chinese-it was justice gone awry.

In any event, I learned that it is healthy to have some suspicion of one's allies, that evacuation and emergency procedures should be written and rehearsed from time to time. The Taiwan experience was later useful to me in Korea. The riot shook me thoroughly; it was a traumatic event in my Foreign Service career.

Let me now go to some other issues. We had a big assistance program in Taiwan, especially military. Much of the earlier aid was in form of budget support, which indirectly provided the resources for Taiwan to pay for imports, including military equipment. By the time of my service I believe military assistance was a mixture of grants and credits, administered by the Military Advisory Group (MAAG) and supervised by the Embassy's Political Section. Economic assistance, including agricultural, was administered by a large contingent of experts in AID in coordination with the Embassy's Economic Section. By the latter half of the 1950s the focus was on project assistance: mostly import substitution, such as fertilizer plants, power plants, and other infrastructure projects. Export industries flourished considerably later when aid was drying up. We provided advisors for a variety of industries, forestry management, sugar and rice production, and rural development (through the JCRR). The "Green Revolution" began in Taiwan.

I concluded that agrarian reforms in Taiwan were highly successful; the program was rather brilliant-one of the best then in existence. Some things were handled better in Japan, but Taiwan was a very good show, much to the credit of JCRR and the agricultural advisors we provided. The genetic work done for the "Green Revolution" was pioneering of the highest standards.

The most powerful hope I had when I left Taiwan was that the younger mainlander generation - more realistic about returning to the mainland and less corrupt than their elders - would coalesce with moderate Taiwanese, so that both groups could work in blending the society together. No thoughts of recapturing the mainland, no false hopes, but a focus on accomplishment in Taiwan. To accommodate this, I favored a "Two Chinas" policy that would recognize two Chinese regimes. I knew Chiang Kai- Shek was violently opposed, but I didn't appreciate adequately the resistance such a policy would also encounter from the PRC. I felt dual recognition was a worthwhile goal; faithful to our allies and realistic about Communist China. At least it would have forced us to face up to the issue of recognizing the PRC.

I left Taiwan with "two Chinas" thoughts very much on my mind. I also felt a distinct loyalty to the people on Taiwan. I felt we had an obligation to them; they were victims of an accident of history - ruled by an emigre regime. But I was firmly convinced any successful policy had to embrace the reality of the PRC.

My first tour in Taiwan left me rather sour about many aspects of Embassy Taipei, which I thought it was a badly managed institution. I needn't repeat my criticism of the Political Section under Meyer; Rankin was aloof and out of touch. I felt strongly that an ambassador should know and mingle with his staff. Rankin kept me waiting a month and a half before he deigned to let me pay a courtesy call. That was just rude, particularly since it was not a large organization. Drumright brought some measurable improvement as did Dave Osborn when he replaced Meyer. Nevertheless, orthodoxy hung heavily over Embassy Taipei throughout my first tour. Joe Yager, who became DCM after my departure, deserves much credit for sheltering us and running an effective Economic Section.

Q: In 1958, you were transferred to the Political Section in Tokyo. Was that an assignment you had sought?

GLEYSTEN: Yes, as I recall, I did seek the assignment, although it was one of several possibilities offered by Personnel. I was attracted by the opportunity to work in a political section, and I had an interest in Japan. The combination seemed ideal for me.

As a junior officer in the Political Section, my job was to report on Japan's relations with China, Taiwan, Korea, and East Asia generally as well as to assist the ambassador in a vigorous US effort to promote normalization of relations between Japan and Korea. Like my assignment to Embassy Taipei, my posting to Tokyo began with a jinx. Ambassador Douglas MacArthur complained about the Department's sending him a Chinese language officer who didn't know Japanese. Probably for lack of alternatives, the Department dug in its heels. I survived pretty well for four years despite a very real handicap.

Ironically, MacArthur, having complained about my language inadequacies, seemed to enjoy interrupting my language study. I used to come to the Chancery one hour early every day and worked hard on the language. MacArthur, an early riser, would call me almost every morning - usually about fifteen minutes after my lesson had started - and often give me an assignment to be done "immediately." These tasks could have been easily left for the regular working day, but he persisted to the point that my language teacher just got tired of waiting outside while I did whatever MacArthur wanted. It got so bad, I was eventually forced to drop my lessons.

My language deficit was a detriment to my work; I had to use translators and interpreters. I leaned heavily on some of my colleagues in the political and economic sections, particularly Al Seligmann and Rick Straus, to help me; they were very kind to do so. Fortunately, most of my contacts in the Foreign Ministry spoke English, and I was able to use my Chinese extensively in my work on China. For example, the head of the China Office in the Foreign Ministry, Okada, did not speak English; we communicated in Chinese in which we both were adequately fluent.

Something over half my time was spent under Ambassador Douglas MacArthur, II with Edwin O. Reischauer succeeding him in 1961. Bill Leonhart was DCM for most of my time in Tokyo, although John Emerson took over in my final months. Among the political counselors, the one I remember the best was Coburn Kidd - a German specialist. He was a wonderful, fine officer, but he was a rookie to East Asia. He was replaced by Jack Goodyear, another new comer to the Japanese scene, as was MacArthur. Dave Osborn, the senior officer in the section, knew Japan well as did several others. I don't know whether there was a conscious attempt made to bring Europeanists to Japan; probably not. MacArthur was given his assignment because Japan was the largest post in Asia and he was being rewarded for service under Eisenhower at NATO. Having served much of his life in Europe, he was attracted to officers with similar experiences, such as Leonhart who succeeded Outerbridge Horsey, another Europeanist. In part this was the result of an over-supply in the service of European experts; they still dominated the personnel system and got first choices. The Japanese language officers got second pickings. This European bias in embassy Tokyo had a minor negative impact on staff morale. There was some resentment about key jobs going to people unfamiliar with the territory, particularly when there were available well qualified officers who knew Japan and Asia. Of course, these officers had to do all the work anyway. They were the heart and soul of the embassy.

In any event, the embassy seemed to function pretty effectively. With a major exception of messages bearing on policy issues, which I will discuss later, the embassy was proficient in its reporting. There was not much interference from the top with normal political and economic reporting on domestic or foreign affairs-so long as it was not on a hot topic or policy matter. There were adequate numbers of Japanese language officers throughout the structure.

I shared an office with Martin Herz and later Jim Sutterlin who dealt with revision of the Security Treaty and Okinawa. Although we both reported to the political counselor, we usually worked very directly with the ambassador and DCM, who hovered over our shoulders because they knew Washington was particularly interested in the subjects we covered. Thanks to understanding political counselors, plus our own active effort to maintain solidarity with our colleagues, this peculiar system worked tolerably well. My ready access to the ambassador certainly saved me a lot of time and gave me more authority in dealing with outsiders than was usual for a relatively junior second secretary.

I had an enviable position in the embassy - even under MacArthur and certainly under Reischauer. I had ample status with my colleagues, and contacts in Japan seemed relatively easy to make even as a non-Japanese speaker. At the Foreign Ministry my contacts were normally at the office director level, quite senior in the Japanese tradition. Not infrequently I would go up a level to the director general of Asian Affairs or his deputy. That of course was exceptional in the Japanese bureaucracy; Japanese officers at my level and age were astonished that I had to gall to ask to see these high level officials, even more that I was received by them. Some of the junior officers - all very high officials later - resented me for this and occasionally told me so over drinks. My view was that as a representative of the US government, I should try to contact the highest level official who would see me. My success was probably a hangover from occupation days. The practice is certainly over now.

In general, the living conditions of the American staff were good. We didn't like living in the embassy's huge housing compound, because it inhibited work as a political officer; e.g. Socialist Party members would refuse to come to the compound, and if they were to have tried visiting us, they might well have been turned away by the police guarding the compound. After about nine months, we finally got permission to rent a house - to which Japanese would come.

Of my tasks, the hottest issue was Korea. Thirteen years after Japan's surrender, Japan and Korea still had not established diplomatic relations. The Koreans had a substantial Mission in Tokyo from occupation days; the Japanese had no representation whatever in Korea and were pretty well barred from most activity in Korea. The atmosphere between the former colonial ruler and the resentful victim of its imperialism was tense. The main disputes were: fisheries; treatment of Koreans in Japan; repatriation of Koreans from Japan to North Korea; and reparations or "compensation" for the colonial period. Some of those issues are still alive today.

The repatriation of Koreans to North Korea was in many ways a more contentious issue between Japan and ourselves than between Japan and Korea. Having been brought as almost slave labor to Japan during WWII, Koreans who wished to return to South Korea had been allowed to leave shortly after the end of the war; not so for those from North Korea. When it became possible in 1959 for these people to return to North Korea, the Japanese were prepared to assist the return. We objected because a voluntary return of anybody to a communist police state was virtually unthinkable for us in the midst of our ideological fervor. We dragged our feet and tried to impose our wishes on Japan. The Japanese managed quite skillfully to pacify us, using third party (International Red Cross) inspections to insure that return was voluntary. Fairly large numbers returned to the North.

The Japanese and Koreans struggled or bickered over everything, often violently in the case of fisheries. President Syngman Rhee frequently whipped up anti-Japan nationalism to deflect domestic criticism of his heavy handed rule; the Japanese in turn often infuriated the Koreans - and sometimes us - by their patronizing attitude and behavior toward their former colonial subjects. Steering around these rocks was a constant challenge, and despite enormous effort on our part, we made little real progress until Rhee was overthrown in 1960 and Park Chung Hee came to power a year later with a clear understanding that his great plans for Korea's economic development wouldn't work without a reconciliation with Japan. Beginning in 1961, the two countries became really serious about normalization. They welcomed our good offices, and quickly established a practical, if still tense, working relationship. Normalization occurred in 1965 while I was in Hong Kong.

I discussed our efforts toward Japan-Korea normalization in an article I wrote for the Japan Foundation's quarterly publication, *Kokusai Koryu*. Written from memory, I dubbed it a "fragment of oral history." I understand it will be attached as Annex A.

China and Taiwan were also lively issues for Japan in those days. The Chinmen-Matsu off-shore islands had led to a major dispute in 1958 between the two Chinas. The Japanese were very uneasy about our tough but defensive position; in fact, the issue had caused a semi-crisis in US-Japan relations before I arrived. In 1959 the Japanese were still nervous, though less so once Khrushchev publicly disassociated the Soviet Union from Mao Zedong's militant posture. In general the Japanese favored a softer line with the PRC. Within Japan, there were several voices. The LDP reluctantly supported us; the Socialists opposed us - the left wing Socialists particularly because they were very close to the Communist Party. But within all parties there were cleavages - moderates and extremists. Sorting out who was on which side was sometimes very complicated, but I found it extremely interesting. I had to know which faction favored what if I were to have a dialogue with them.

Despite much sympathy for Taiwan, Japanese generally felt China was more important to them than Taiwan, and if it had been left to a majority vote, the country would have switched recognition long before 1972. However, the conservative, anti-communists who dominated US China policy also kept Japan in line by firm advice and trade offs, beginning with Prime Minister Yoshida during negotiation of the Japanese Peace Treaty, and still continuing while I was in Tokyo. I spent a great deal of time talking to varieties of Japanese in contact with China: officials, politicians, and journalists. From these contacts I tried to convey an accurate assessment of Japanese opinion, and, of course, did my duty in explaining our own policy - even though I was out of sympathy with some aspects of it. My years in Tokyo were a wonderful introduction to the kind of detailed analysis that I had to do when moved to Hong Kong in 1962.

As in most of my posts I had relatively close relationships with CIA officers dealing with my subjects. Don Gregg, one of my successors as ambassador to Korea, was one of my counterparts in Tokyo and I got along very well with him. I was generally aware what the Station was reporting and doing in my areas of responsibility. My considerable contact with CIA people was very helpful to me - and I hope to them.

Revision of the US-Japan Security Treaty during 1958-60 was the defining issue during my tour in Tokyo. I think we were caught off guard. In seeking modification, we were genuinely motivated by a desire to ease Japanese concerns and naturally assumed our move would be welcomed in Japan. We were of course aware of strong opposition to the revision - and the whole Treaty for that matter - from the Socialist and Communist parties. Since militant leftists had not been able to prevent the original Treaty from being ratified and were not in control of the Diet or the government, we didn't believe they would succeed in blocking the Treaty's revision. What we underestimated was the existence within the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of a substantial dovish faction, which had some sympathy for the left's views.

Back during the Korean war, the US military used Japan as a rear base for operations on the peninsula. Even after the end of our occupation of Japan, the new security treaty gave us the right to use bases in Japan for the defense of Japan and the Far East. The Japanese were concerned that some provisions of the Treaty were inconsistent with Japan's rights as a sovereign nation; in particular that US activities under the Treaty might automatically drag Japan into war in the face of a strongly pacifist mood among its people.

From the beginning, the treaty was severely criticized by leftists and others, and that stimulated the conservatives, who supported the treaty, to push for treaty changes that might dampen public criticism. I was in Washington at the time-a young civil servant. I remember cables from the embassy in the mid-1950s suggesting the Treaty should be revised. MacArthur, who was the counselor of the department at the time, was responsive, and when he later became ambassador in Tokyo he got Washington's agreement to revision. Americans in general thought the Japanese would be receptive, underestimating opposition sentiment. The process of revision opened up a great debate on Japan's role in the world based on its history and future. I am convinced we missed the passion of this in our initial reporting.

When the revision process came to its final stages in 1959-60, the opposition used bodily force and other blocking tactics, provoking the government into foolish responses. After the opposition physically prevented the government's efforts to have the Treaty ratified by its large majority in the Diet, the LDP steam-rolled ratification through by stealth. There were other instances of undemocratic behavior that dismayed the public and middle of the road forces, adding tension to the national debate. My sense was that the debate was most vigorous among young people, particularly intellectuals. There were more disaffected people than we had assumed. In the midst of the storm, James Haggerty, President Eisenhower's press secretary, arrived in Tokyo to prepare the way for the president's long-scheduled visit. The students went on a rampage at Haneda Airport, physically attacking Haggerty's car, threatening his party, and forcing him to continue his journey to Tokyo by helicopter. This outburst of student protest and violence culminated a couple of years later in extraordinary extremism - extensive burning and closing of Tokyo University as well as the formation of the "Red Army" and its terrorist tactics. In the chancery that evening, the atmosphere was extremely tense, since we feared things might rip out of control. With most of my seniors at the airport with Haggerty, I remember summoning up all my unexalted authority to order the Naval Attache, a US Navy captain, to pull back from the windows where he was running frantically back and forth with a loaded automatic rifle. I was convinced his behavior would prove incendiary if he were seen by the angry clouds outside.

The protests continued after Haggerty's departure. With the public looking on neutrally, huge numbers of students and left-wing union members occupied the center city area near our chancery and the Diet building to stage noisy but largely peaceful demonstrations. Several times a day I had to pass through a sea of them on my way to and from work or going to the embassy annex a few blocks away. With rare exception I found the students cheerful and rather friendly, the labor unionists less so but not hostile. Eventually, however, the tactics of both demonstrators and police became rougher, and violence broke out in the vicinity of the Diet. As I recall at least two students, including a girl, were killed; quite a few others were injured. The protest movement persisted until the government finally capitulated and canceled the Eisenhower visit.

I certainly fault the embassy for its management and reporting of this whole affair. We left the impression that the LDP, which had been formed by the amalgamation of the Liberal and Democratic parties, was strongly in favor of treaty revision. This basic embassy view, effectively dictated by MacArthur and Leonhart, understated the depth of the opposition to the revision, even in conservative circles, and it discounted the degree of popular opposition. So when opposition voices were finally heard loud and clear before the president's scheduled visit, it was an enormous embarrassment to the US in general and the American embassy in Tokyo in particular.

Clearly, MacArthur and Leonhart, who were so confident about everything and so eager to have a successful summit meeting in Tokyo, deserve most of the blame. The political section - and CIA - at least tried to introduce a cautionary note through comments from lower level Foreign Ministry officials, journalists, and politicians who questioned prospects for treaty ratification. Some of this material was reported but usually in a low key manner and framework of ultimate confidence. As the unrest progressed after ratification and fissures appeared within the LDP, many Japanese wondered why we could not see what was coming; it was so obvious to them that the Japanese Government was having second thoughts about the desirability of proceeding with the Eisenhower visit. At this point some key officers of the Section took a stand, urging cancellation or delay. John Stegmaier, a man with a real feel for the Japanese mood, was one of them. For the most part these late signals and embassy second thoughts were not reported or not reported accurately. To put it bluntly, MacArthur's and Leonhart's censorship played a major role in the embassy's mishandling of the visit.

Of course, there was some collective responsibility for the embassy's misjudgements. My colleagues covering Japan's domestic scene should have been more alert to the extent of domestic opposition, particularly within the LDP. Herz and I should also have had a better sense of it. We all should have tried harder to warn Washington. All of us were too influenced by the steadily optimistic line taken by MacArthur and Leonhart. However, these two men were really responsible for the mess. The worse things became, the more compulsive their confidence. Trapped by earlier misjudgments, they squelched pessimistic reports and misleadingly jazzed up embassy assessments. Their role was reprehensible - sometimes stunningly dishonest.

By happenstance I was present as the note taker when Prime Minister Kishi sent one of his cabinet members, a close confidant, to tell Ambassador MacArthur that the government had reluctantly concluded President Eisenhower should not visit Japan during his East Asian swing. Despite forewarning intelligence, MacArthur appeared surprised and stunned, and for a while he tried to argue with the messenger. More understandably, Washington also was stunned by the turn of events, because even after weeks of turmoil in Japan, the embassy had persisted with its flawed assessment.

It would have been helpful if the US government had a better comprehension of the ambivalence existing in Japan regarding the Treaty. We might have been more active in trying to calm Japanese fears of being dragged into a conflict between Cold War antagonists, explaining more clearly to them the advantages of a US-Japan Security Treaty. We should have worked harder in general and particularly with the LDP to prevent the Diet debacle. In fact, we may have inadvertently fostered LDP parliamentary errors, because we pushed so hard for prompt action on the revision vote. In any event, the US government failed to understand the reality of the Japanese public mood, a mood which sustained the demonstrations and the Diet maneuvers that eventually forced cancellation of Eisenhower's visit.

In the long run, revision of the Security Treaty was good for Japan; in the short run, the process of revision and the need to cancel a US Presidential visit was an enormous strain and humiliation. The Japanese were relieved when the trip was canceled but at the same time ashamed. The humiliation was made worse by the overwhelming reception Eisenhower received in Seoul.

As a result of the confrontation, Prime Minister Kishi resigned and was replaced by Ikeda. I was assigned as escort officer for the congressional delegation that came for Ikeda's inauguration or equivalent ceremony. Ikeda received the delegation at a garden party accompanied by his entire cabinet. He apologized for all the confusion, promised to sustain good relations with us, and announced the powerful economic development drive that later led to the coining of the phrase "Japan, Inc." When the head of the congressional delegation got up to respond, he forgot his entire briefing. He didn't know Ikeda's name, didn't know Ikeda was the prime minister, and couldn't figure out why "this nice Japanese gentleman" was being so hospitable. I was so dumfounded I don't remember what I did.

My complaint about intellectual dishonesty in Embassy Tokyo is not a casual one. During this period MacArthur and Leonhart bullied their staff into conveying a picture of steadiness and progress which was contrary to reality. Finagling with the truth was a problem throughout MacArthur's and Leonhart's tenure. I remember one message which I wrote reporting a conversation with the director general of the Foreign Ministry's Asian Bureau regarding Dutch behavior in Indonesia. Leonhart, who seemed to favor the Dutch over the Indonesians, completely changed the thrust of my telegram by casually revising my verbatim quotes. It was so bad I told him I would not sign the telegram. If he insisted on sending it, he would have to be shown as the drafting officer. Leonhart backed down after a couple of hours of reflection, but we didn't talk for a couple of days.

I had similar confrontations with MacArthur. There were times when he would disguise his authorship of an idea by reporting it as a Japanese one, for example putting his own words in the mouth of the foreign minister in meetings that I attended as the note-taker. He would also fudge the facts in reporting cables, suggesting in the commentary that the Japanese had originated an idea or approved it when in fact there was no sympathy at all with the US view. Effectively, we were conveying a distorted picture to Washington. When I confronted MacArthur over this practice he laughed me off, but the practice stopped at least in my messages. I especially remember my refusal to include MacArthur's nasty invective about Marshall Green, our charge' in Seoul, in a message to Washington. I won the battle. Even my softened version of the message brought a rebuke from the State Department - asking both Tokyo and Seoul to mind our manners. I don't think I solicited the Department's action, but it was beautifully timed.

Perhaps, I was caught up in this kind of conflict more than others because of my personal standards but I suspect the main reason was my working so often directly with the ambassador and DCM without the political counselor serving as an intermediary. Fortunately for me, my stubbornness eventually led to a more satisfactory relationship with the front office - far better than some my colleagues who failed to draw a line in the sand.

While on this subject, I might mention the effect on the embassy of the ambassadorial change from MacArthur to Reischauer. It was tremendous. MacArthur was viewed by the embassy as a little dictator. He was uniformly disliked. There was considerable criticism about his lack of appreciation and understanding of Japan; he rarely left Tokyo to visit other parts of Japan. Because of these characteristics and the censorship that he and Leonhart exercised over a key sector of embassy reporting, the atmosphere in the embassy was overbearing - in some sense, I suspect it was very much like the atmosphere generated by his uncle General MacArthur a decade earlier. The nephew was equally high handed and equally full of himself.

So when MacArthur left, there was a great sense of relief in the embassy. Bill Leonhart served as charge'. He was just a little less unpopular than MacArthur. He also had a huge ego. He was very competent and intellectually superior to MacArthur. But he suffered from the same weakness: a compulsion to control all things in the embassy - reports, personnel assignments, etc. Substantively, he and MacArthur viewed Japan in the same way. As charge', Leonhart took some very strange actions, so strange I thought he might be off his rocker. For example, he issued orders about working on Saturdays, about duty officers on Sunday, and finally a statement about wives' "obligations." Today, those orders would be attacked in court; in those days, they just seemed out of line or crazy. By pure coincidence, an inspection had begun just as MacArthur was leaving, and Leonhart got himself into terrible trouble with the inspectors. The orders that I just mentioned were rescinded, and I believe that the unfavorable inspection report effected both men's subsequent careers. MacArthur was offered the ambassadorship to Belgium, rather than one of the large posts that he really sought.

Reischauer was popular. The political section had some initial reservations that he might be naive. He had written an article for Foreign Affairs which mentioned the "broken dialogue" between Japan and the US, suggesting that the Embassy needed to broaden its outreach to include the opposition, especially the Socialists. Obviously he was not well informed about our extensive contacts with the Socialists. Despite some brief resentment over this, Reischauer was known to us as a highly influential Japan scholar who knew the country well. Moreover, after he arrived any concern about him seemed to evaporate relatively quickly. He was very open to the staff and it responded to his civilized style. Not everything was as I would have liked it, but in contrast to MacArthur, Reischauer was a real blessing. More important, the Japanese responded well to Reischauer, seeing his appointment as the end of an undeclared "post occupation era" under the general's nephew. Reischauer had certain prejudices about Japan, but they were honorable and the embassy staff could live with them without much difficulty. His arrival gave the embassy a new lease on life. Control from the front office was much more benign - far less domineering. I found that Reischauer shared my views on China, and almost immediately, the embassy began to take different line on the PRC's relations with Japan and its neighbors. Whenever we could, we stressed the need for direct US-PRC communication. I was delighted. His views on Korea were similar to MacArthur's but he was more imaginative and considerate. In general the embassy loosened up. Reischauer never tried to censor my reports. In fact, unless the report had something to do directly with him, Reischauer didn't insist on prior approval; he would simply read a copy of what was sent.

So much for the nature of Embassy Tokyo and the problems we faced during my tour. Let me ramble on a bit about the way Japan was looking at the world and itself at that time. When I arrived in Japan in 1958, it was the end of the post-occupation period. The Peace Treaty signed in 1951 formally ended the occupation, but it still took another decade for us to stop trying to guide Japan's domestic affairs. During this period, Japan's economy was beginning to perform very well; GDP was increasing every year by large percentages. There were unmistakable signs of the "new Japan." Actually there were two co-existing Japanese societies, new and old, and both very visible in Tokyo. Sony had a new gleaming white transistor manufacturing plant that was the state of the art. The Japanese military, given their close relationship with US forces, were was pretty much up to date. The Japanese bureaucracy, particularly that part involved in new initiatives such as industrial development and foreign assistance, was modern minded. On the other hand, there was also the "old Japan." One could still see lots of small manufacturing plants that were quite primitive. The taxis were dirty and worn; the drivers from the countryside didn't know the city and drove recklessly. Getting one's car fixed properly was difficult. The criteria that we use today to judge Japan's modernity were just beginning to emerge. Back then Japan might have been categorized as a "developing country in some respects." Today everything is done with white gloves on. That was not so in the 1950s.

In the late 1950s, the relationship between Japan and Korea was still severely constrained by Japan's colonial past. The Japanese forcibly occupied Korea in the early part of the 20th Century and their rule was harsh. Many Japanese were not the least remorseful about their occupation; they didn't consider their rule as particularly bad. They felt that they had done the Koreans a favor by bringing in new technology and capital, thereby increasing Korea's economic development. Although there was some truth to that, it was a rather arrogant point of view to say the least. Fortunately, there was a more enlightened view among more sensitive Japanese, including many in the Japanese Foreign Ministry. The director general of Asian Affairs, Iseki, and the office director for Korea, Toshikazu Maeda, were with some justification considered "pro-Korean" by their peers.

As for the Koreans, there was a strong nationalistic bias - often stubborn and excessively bitter - in their attitude toward Japan. They tended to use very aggressive tactics; e.g. they would seize Japanese fishing vessels, beat up, and imprison the crews for years. The smallest incident had to be dealt with at the foreign minister level and sometimes at the prime minister/presidential level. High level involvement in both Tokyo and Seoul pushed these disputes to senior levels in Washington as well. In the case of a fishing vessel's capture, our ambassador in Seoul almost always would be instructed to go see President Syngman Rhee - who would more or less thumb his nose at us.

I maintained close contact with our embassy in Seoul by cable and sometimes by phone and sometimes by letter. I knew my counterparts as well as Marshall Green, the DCM, and the ambassadors (Dowling, McConaughy, and Berger) whom I escorted during their frequent trips to Seoul. On the other hand, there were tensions between our two embassies. Both suffered from a "clientitis" that permeated to all levels. We in Tokyo were overly pro-Japanese and our people in Seoul were overly pro-Korean. In general, Washington was the referee and did a pretty good job at it. Sometimes, tensions between our ambassadors got nasty.

I dealt with many Koreans in Japan. I saw their top diplomat, Minister Yu Tae Ha, who was later jailed for corruption. I had easy access to him and his staff, which included Choi Kyu Ha, Park Chung Hee's successor as President of the ROK. So I was quite familiar with the Korean positions on issues. Although I tried hard to maintain neutrality, it was hard since I saw many more Japanese.

We were bothered by the fact that many of the Korean residents in Japan were pro-North Korean, tending to see it as an ideological failure on someone's part rather than a fact of life. MacArthur, I think, suspected they were a nefarious force directed to work with Japanese leftists against the US-Japan alliance, a sub plot of the Cold War. However, the basic factor was that most of these people had originally come from North Korea. In addition, some of the leftist reaction from the Korean community was stimulated by unfair treatment by the Japanese authorities. The oppressed and poor of the Korean community were ripe for North Korea propaganda, and the North did a better job of appearing to support them than the South did. In my reporting I tried to convey some sense of this.

This was my first opportunity to become acquainted with Korea. I didn't get to visit the country until October 1961, but I had virtually complete access to State and CIA telegram traffic on Korea, and I talked to everyone I could. Park Chung Hee's coup in May 1961 intensified my interest; I followed the coup and its aftermath with great care and fascination. It was a valuable lesson, which stood me in good stead 18 years later when I as the American ambassador to Korea had to deal with a military coup.

In the early 1960s, Korea was still trying to recover from the war. There was not much evidence of economic development. The hill sides were bare-no trees (very much like parts of North Korea today.) It was quite depressing. One sensed that it was the US Army and our aid program that held the country together - of course our people peddled that line, demeaning the Koreans and things Korean. In fact, Korea was in some respects a "basket case," and its future looked rather bleak. Yet even then there were some hints of what was to come. I saw a few successful assistance projects. I was impressed by the high level of education available to Koreans; I found the Koreans to whom I spoke very sensible. After 1961, I made several more trips to South Korea and observed Korea's economic development program beginning to take off.

Now let me get into greater detail about the Japan-PRC relationship. They did not have diplomatic relations; Japan recognized Taiwan as the government of China, just as we did. But behind this facade, considerable contact developed. PRC officials came to Tokyo where they visited with foreign ministry officials, politicians, and businessmen. Our rules precluded my seeing them. Generally, our Japanese and foreign hosts took this prohibition into account whenever they invited us to social functions. They accepted it as being a silly rule. There were a number of LDP politicians who visited Beijing in addition to greater numbers of Socialists, often shown making deferential approaches to Mao Zedong. So a substantial relationship was developing. Trade was growing. The LDP was trying hard to prevent the Socialists and Communists from monopolizing relations with the PRC. That approach was not viable with our stubborn policy and got the LDP and government into hot water with us on occasion.

The United States tried vigorously to block Japanese contacts with the PRC, sometimes in feckless ways. We sought to hinder the growth of trade as much as we could; failing that, we tolerated trade in civilian areas, such as agriculture, but correctly we stood firm in our objections to Japanese exports of advanced technology and items that could be used for military purposes.

Our negative posture did not change measurably during the four years I was in Japan, but it was clear to me by 1962 that Japan-China relations would grow closer as time passed - regardless of our policy stance. Furthermore, I felt that the Japanese were right and we were wrong. From the beginning of my Foreign Service career until Nixon's visit, I thought the US was wrong in its China policy. This made my tasks sometimes very difficult.

The Japanese had been forced to recognize Taiwan as part of the peace treaty process. They maintained better than just "proper" relations with the Nationalists in part because Chiang Kai-shek had forsworn a demand for reparations. In addition, the Japanese had a nostalgia for Taiwan, their former colony. Unlike Korea, the people of Taiwan had a view of Japan that was almost positive. The occupation had been much more benevolent than Korea's, and some compared Japanese behavior favorably to the early years of Nationalist rule.

Although economic considerations helped drive Japan toward a closer relationship with Beijing, the Japanese wanted to get along with the government on the mainland for moral and strategic reasons as well. Following the disaster of the war against China, the prevalent view by this time was that it would be smarter for Japan to accommodate itself to the powerful ruling government in mainland China. They hoped a closer relationship would advance Japan's security and trade interests. The Japanese thought that we should be more understanding of their position, and I thought they were absolutely right.

There were also some sentimental factors at work, although these were often exaggerated by Japanese under the influence of alcohol. Japanese felt indebted to China for its influence on their culture, and quite a few of them were genuinely remorseful about the barbarity of their past behavior. In those days the Koreans didn't fare so well; the Japanese were much more deferential towards China than Korea.

When I was in Tokyo, the Japanese were much less concerned about China's military strength than we were; there was some talk about Chinese power having a negative effect on Japan, requiring perhaps some degree of remilitarization, but the concern was buffered by the alliance with us. Japan-China relations are much more complicated today than they were in the 1950s and 1960s.

We also spent a lot of time on the Soviet Union. Washington in its directives to us tended to assume a relatively monolithic communist world. Most of us in Tokyo felt differently and when talking to Japanese, we tried to express our views in more sophisticated ways than the black and white oratory stemming from Washington. To their credit the Japanese had a rather accurate sense of complex relations within the communist camp. They would stress that the Chinese communists were quite different from those in the Soviet Union and that within the Chinese Communist Party there were divisions about domestic and foreign issues. The Japanese would provide me with the analysis of their intelligence community, which I eagerly reported to Washington. -particularly since I agreed with much of the Japanese analysis. My reporting was well received at least by some factions in Washington. Since strains were becoming so apparent in Soviet-Chinese relations, it is amazing to me that our ideologues managed to hold off a realistic assessment for so long.

I might at this stage talk a little about Japan's international orientation in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This is important because it affected Japanese policy on Korea, China and the security treaty. When I arrived in Tokyo in 1958, Japan was a country trying to sort out its past and its future; it was a society in flux. The conservatives were in control - Yoshida was no longer the Prime Minister, but still influential. Although a conservative, he did not unqualifiedly defend Japan's actions during the war. He was proud of many Japanese accomplishments, including its post-war effort to pull itself up from the ashes. Yoshida was part of the establishment which tended to be internationalist, anti-communist, pro-business, concerned by left wing radical movements - beyond the Communist and Socialist Parties. All of these views were welcomed by us.

Although Prime Minister Kishi and some of the other conservatives with whom we worked closely had been war criminals, they more or less shared Yoshida's popular vision of a non-military Japan that would depend on the US for security and concentrate its energies on economic development. Of course there were many unreconstructed elements within conservative ranks. There were real hard liners who would periodically vent their frustrations and complicate matters without much real influence on policy making. There were also some conservatives who appeared cooperative but had hidden agendas.

The left was much larger than it is today. There was a large Communist Party, an even larger and growing Socialist Party. Ambassador Reischauer and the political section wondered if and when they would take the reins of government. Within the Socialist Party, there was a faction with views close to the Communists. There was another faction which sometimes sounded radical, but was in fact quite moderate. There was an anti-Soviet nationalist faction within the Communist Party. There were even pro-Soviet, pro-PRC, pro-North Korean figures within the conservative camp! A rather complicated pattern. In general, most of Japan fell into a category between the extremes. It was this middle group that was sometimes hard for us to assess - as in the case of the aborted Eisenhower visit.

I don't think the embassy distinguished itself in mapping out the Japanese political scene for Washington. I remember occasional presentations that were excellent, but the ambassadors, especially MacArthur, had a proclivity to doctor assessments to suit Washington's Cold War thinking. We could have had a better understanding of the political process in Japan, and if we had, we might have done some things better. We did not handle our relationship with forces of the right in a very intelligent way; during the occupation we let the war criminals off too easily; we tolerated the presence of the right wing in places where we could and should have removed them. Many Japanese felt that we were letting our concern with communism and the Cold War stand in the way of a proper appreciation of Japanese sentiments. To some extent, I would say this was a fair criticism.

We also failed to appreciate the degree to which the Japanese left had earned credibility in society because of its anti-regime, anti-war positions in the 1930s and 1940s. Although we took note of this in our reporting, we didn't give it enough weight. When I first arrived, I went to a lecture by a semi-academic politician - who had been recommended to me by some of my moderate Socialist contacts on China. His lecture stunned me by its naivete about the Soviet Union and PRC as well as the severe misunderstandings he had about US foreign policy. He had a neutralist vision devoid of reality about the practical world; his policy recommendations were disastrous. I wondered how reasonable Japanese could support such crap, but in fact this man had considerable influence in university and political circles. It stemmed from his cache as an opponent of Japan's military governments. Baffling as they sometimes seemed to us, these attitudes affected Japan's behavior - regarding revision of the security treaty, policy toward China and so on.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, I was worried about the Japanese public's apparent receptivity to left-leaning neutralist ideas. I was more bothered by left-wing of the larger Socialist Party than by the Communist Party that had already demonstrated some genuine nationalistic sensibilities vis a vis the Soviet Union and China. Nevertheless, I didn't really fear that the left would come to power in Japan; I thought that the LDP would find a way to block them or that they would come to their senses before taking power.

On the conservative side, I underestimated Japan's willingness to go along as a sort of junior partner to the US - even though gradually moving along to a more equal relationship. I predicted that by the end of the 20th Century, the Japanese would become the "Gaullists of East Asia"; a more independent, nationalistic, and possibly nuclear Japan - though no more hostile to us than France. I did not cherish that prospect and urged that we try to forestall it by establishing a web of carefully crafted relationships. I remember writing a number of commentaries along these lines. Reischauer disagreed with me, and so far he has proven right. In the complicated "sorting out" to determine Japan's future policies, the direction and speed of Japan's economic development and trade have played an enormous part, helping the conservatives and damaging the left, which has proved unable to accommodate if not completely incompetent to deal with these matters. Failures of the communist world have further limited Japan's choices. The conclusion of this process has not come as a great surprise to me, but I did not believe that the pattern would be quite as clear or as helpful as it has been to our interests.

Last, I might just make few remarks about the Japanese decision-making process. When I was in Tokyo - and I think this is still very much the case - bureaucrats, all the way down to lower levels, played a powerful role and were exceptionally aware of the political context in which they operated. For example, in making recommendations to the office director, the third ranking officer in the Korean section of the Foreign Ministry would know our views, probably from being the silent note-taker at a variety of our meetings with Foreign Ministry officials. He would also be familiar with opinions of key Diet members, often by having talked to politicians himself as a result of personal relationships. My sense was that Japanese bureaucrats were more knowledgeable of views in the Diet than we were about the Congress. This exposure helped young officials shape decisions to be approved by their bosses. Incidentally the number three on the Korea or China desk was often a marked man expected to rise to deputy foreign minister or ambassador. Many of the senior officials I worked with later started there.

In addition, every level of the bureaucracy was more conservative than the one below - which is not uncommon in any bureaucracy. Decisions made by consensus moving upwards were hard to overturn; sometimes we did succeed but it was always tough sledding. The process gave the Japanese bureaucracy an image of independent power, but it was not quite as self-contained as people imagined. It is interesting to note that much of the consensus building between the government and the politicians was done at junior levels. That these officials could advise their superiors about political sentiment struck me as quite a contrast to the Department of State.

In conclusion to these long winded comments I must say that my Japan assignment was one of the best I ever had. It was fascinating. I witnessed some tumultuous events which were part of Japan's effort as an independent, sovereign nation trying to wean itself away from the dependent psychology associated with the American occupation. Furthermore, I found the embassy's management under MacArthur and Leonhart a negative learning experience I will never forget. I was lucky that during the early part of my career I was in a political section that gave me heavy exposure to the embassy's front office and the opportunity to work with so many gifted officers. That was invaluable and served me well in my later assignments.

Q: In 1962, you were assigned to Hong Kong as an economic officer. How did you manage to get such an assignment that made sense in career terms?

GLEYSTEN: During my whole career, I think I was rather lucky in being assigned to positions that made sense for me and for the Foreign Service. I knew from my friends that Hong Kong was about to have a major turn-over in staff. There was talk of my replacing David Dean - a schoolmate and a language school fellow graduate. I also knew the consul general, Marshall Green, and some of the right people in the Department. So everything worked well from my point of view.

In Hong Kong I was one of two deputies in the China Section headed by John Holdridge. I supervised reporting on the PRC's economy; the much smaller Hong Kong Section handled reporting on Hong Kong. In our section of "China watchers" I recall only one officer who had special economic training. All I had was basic economics at the undergraduate level plus my Taiwan experience. Although we were amateurs in economic theory, our lack of expertise was not a major drawback. We had a commonsense grasp of our subject which had a heavy political content. The distinction between political and economic was blurred in our work.

We had a local staff of about 15 people, who were highly competent. Some were professional economists - university trained. We paid them well by Foreign Service, not commercial, standards. Their services were an indispensable part of our operations. We included the local staff in our discussions to a degree that would not have been permitted in other posts. They did things that the American staff could not do - e.g. reading far more voraciously and extensively in Chinese than we were able to. What made this unique collaboration possible was that in the main we used unclassified material open to all.

I first met Marshall Green in Washington about ten years earlier while serving in S/S - after his return from London to work in the EA Bureau. Then I had quite a bit of contact with him while he was DCM in Seoul and I was in Tokyo. My early impressions of Marshall were consistent with the image he had in the Department: a lively, amusing, upwardly mobile, very ambitious officer. Looking from the outside, I think Marshall did a good job as DCM in Seoul, except perhaps during the first stage of Park Chung Hee's coup. In Hong Kong, I only had a very brief exposure because he left soon after my arrival. During this brief period, I felt Marshall was sound in his assessment of the China issues.

Our paths crossed again in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He was the assistant secretary for EA; I was the East Asia director in INR. I saw him daily, briefing him on the latest developments in the area. I spent at least half an hour with him and often more. I developed a great deal of respect for him. Throughout every phase of his life, he was cheerful and a master of puns - even at funerals.

My second consul general was Ed Rice, a friendly hands-on officer. Ed was one of the early "China hands." He had a number of out-of-area assignments, but had returned to EA to be a deputy assistant secretary before coming to Hong Kong. He had known Chinese well, although by the time he reached Hong Kong, his language skills had deteriorated.

John Holdridge was in charge of what in Beijing would have been called the political and economic sections. Heyward Isham, a Soviet expert, supervised the political side and I the economic. There were 5 or 6 officers in each unit. After about a year, Holdridge left for home leave and a period of duty on a personnel panel-probably a promotion board-which about half a year. At Rice's request, I filled in for Holdridge. It was somewhat awkward, because Isham and I were the same rank, born in the same month, went to same university and graduated in the same year - although we didn't know each other. I was chosen over him simply because I was a China officer and he was not.

When Holdridge returned, I went back to my economic assignment for a short period before leaving Hong Kong. Substituting for Holdridge was very useful for me; Ed Rice seemed satisfied and I worked with him on a major despatch, analyzing our interests in China and recommending a shift in our recognition policy. Both of us were proud of our hard work, which was the intellectual high point of my assignment. My inquiries later in Washington suggest that Dean Rusk and Co. hadn't seen it or brushed it aside.

In addition to our China reporting, the consulate general had a normal operation dealing with Hong Kong itself, including political, economic, and consular functions. There was a little overlap between the two operations, but we got along very well. Essentially the Hong Kong consulate general consisted of two institutions, both supervised by the consul general. It was a large operation.

We lived in enviable circumstances. Hong Kong was the most comfortable of my posts. The CG building was fairly new and well maintained. It was quite spacious; every officer had a small private office. The building was located downtown in a choice area near good restaurants. We had individual houses for the most part, but also occupied small apartments in various lovely places. I lived in a double apartment complex on Deepwater Bay, which was not too hard to take. Other people lived in Stanley, Repulse Bay, and downtown. The DCM lived on a hill side overlooking Deepwater Bay. The CG lived part way up the Peak. Living may not have been luxurious, but it was far better than adequate. No one should have complained.

Hong Kong, in the 1962-65 period, was beginning to shine - a new development. I remember visiting Hong Kong in 1953 when people were dismissing it as place that "wouldn't make it" much past the end of the Korean War. It was having severe economic problems caused by the enormous refugee influx; it couldn't pull itself together. But we should not forget that in the early 1950s Korea was ridiculed as a "basket case", Taiwan was a dictatorship with severe problems, and even Japan had not yet taken off economically. People tend to forget those rugged days. Starting with the mid-1950s, Hong Kong began to blossom - becoming the trade gateway into the PRC, providing a savvy base for foreign companies that wished to work in East Asia and China, and serving as one of the first locations for modern labor intensive export industries. Hong Kong lived under the rule of law, with an independent judiciary based on English law. By the time I was later stationed in Hong Kong, it was a thriving, vital city. The business community was very vigorous. There was already considerable affluence in the Chinese community, indicated by the ever increasing number of privately owned boats in various harbors and new cars on the street. It was already clear that the Chinese were becoming the predominant element.

The American business community was heavily focused on banking. There were considerable business opportunities for US banks in Hong Kong, but they were also interested in being ready if and when China would open up for them. Many major American companies located their Asian headquarters in Hong Kong. In the same way as banks, these companies did business in Hong Kong, but they were also readying themselves to invest in the PRC when the time was right.

In many respects the rules for US contact with the mainland were silly. We were all barred from doing any business with the PRC, leaving that growing field to others. For example, we could not buy goods made in the PRC, even if sold in Hong Kong. Food consumed in Hong Kong was more or less exempted. American firms, such as banking, had to be careful that none of their transactions involved the PRC or its citizens. That was not easy, but I think the American firms did their best to keep within US rules. All American transactions were monitored by the consulate general; we had a treasury attache with a staff that was strict on the issue of trade with the PRC. I thought it was a very foolish policy. But it was implemented with great vigor - except, of course, on senators and congressmen.

I might say a word about the problems and challenges of remote reporting on China from Hong Kong. In those days virtually no Americans were allowed to go to the PRC. No officials were permitted to do so, and the rare exceptions were doctors or other professionals who had a good reason and political connections in Washington. The Japanese and the Europeans, even if they did not have diplomatic relations, freely allowed their citizens to visit and do business in the PRC. Our rules were an enormous barrier to travel and a self-inflicted handicap to our understanding of China. Nevertheless, once you overcame feeling foolish, there were plenty of opportunities for useful work. We had to be vacuum cleaners, pulling in any information about the PRC we could. We would talk to every interesting traveler. We would meet endlessly in hotel rooms or invite them to the consulate general or our homes. We would cover every minute of their stay in the PRC. Our big net covered many Japanese, European, Australian, New Zealand and some Americans - like journalists - who got in, one way another.

With practice we became pretty good in the choice of interlocutors, so we were able to focus on those who had something to say. Some were gold mines. They were perceptive; they might had high level contacts up to the highest, including Mao. They knew what to look for. Some of them traveled periodically to the PRC, giving them and us, a sense of perspective. There were only a few of these, but they were the gems.

For the most part, people were willing to share information and views with us. We had a good reputation, unlike the Cold War headquarters mentality and ideology prevalent in Washington. The consulate general had built up an almost academic reputation over the years; its staff was considered sensible and their judgments had proven pretty good. Many consuls general contributed to this aura. In my time, I felt lucky to inherit it and worked hard to sustain it. Our sources were usually cooperative; quite a few liked coming in to the consulate general, although we always offered to meet them elsewhere. As far as I know, none of our contacts were barred from travel to the PRC because of us, although it was always a concern. We tried to protect people whose comments could be easily traced back to them - a remark by Mao Zedong could be easily traced back because only a few would have had the opportunity to hear it. Generally, however, our activities were very transparent.

The second aspect of the job was to be an intelligent reader, mostly in translation but selectively in Chinese as well. We were allowed legally to buy Chinese communist publications - a great privilege! We read for hours on end. We had a very, very large translating operation that was only closed recently. Every day, there would be reams and reams of material coming out of that section and by wireless from a parallel operation in Okinawa. Much of the stuff was quite good and useful. I did my own reading whenever I could, thereby maintaining some fluency in the language in which I was trained. This was the only time in my career that I did that - reading original political and economic materials coming from the PRC. I concentrated on certain key publications; I wasn't good enough to skim huge volumes of material.

We drew from academic sources everywhere in the world for help with our analysis. If it was not in English, we would have it translated. We had intelligence operations paralleling our work; the intelligence community was less fettered by restrictions than we were, and I found their product useful. It was not the answer to a prayer, but it did add to our knowledge. The information collected was freely shared with us; I had good relations with the station chief.

We exchanged information with other countries, primarily Western European ones and Japan. We worked closely with the British whose operations were quite similar to ours, although they had the advantage of having intelligence representation in the PRC. In terms of quality, I generally found the Japanese most insightful - perhaps a subjective hangover from my previous assignment. I maintained contact with the Japanese consul generals and their deputies. If I had to rank various countries in terms of their usefulness for us I would mention Great Britain first, followed by Japan, and then Western European countries. They were all very cooperative and very useful. We generally did not interview refugees directly, because the British had a skilled refugee screening program that produced large quantities of material. Information collected from refugees included a great deal of junk and often lacked perspective. Refugees were not necessarily representative of the mainland Chinese population or balanced observers of the China scene. Many academics-e.g. Ezra Vogel, Doak Barnett, Jerry Cohen-interviewed refugees at length. I was happy to glean their results rather than go through the drudgery of their interviews. Occasionally, I myself talked to a particularly interesting refugee.

Perhaps colored by my own interests, my sense of priorities in Hong Kong was: first, interpreting events within China; second, trying to influence our China policy by conveying the Asian pieces of the context; third, providing insight on the Chinese approach to the Soviet Union, Indochina, Taiwan, Hong Kong itself, and East Asia generally.

Although I know of no institution that did it better, I must admit we did only a passable job of interpreting what was happening within China. Despite the lurches of Mao Zedong's leadership and the mind-boggling nature of some of his policies, we usually were able - with a time lapse - to use refugees and traveler reports, publications, and occasional snippets of good intelligence to give Washington a fair sense of what was actually happening in the country. But there were always big gaps; and we had few clues to help decipher what was going within the inner councils of the leadership. Our self-imposed absence from China and ban on contacts with Chinese didn't help. Our biggest failures were in the area of prediction. There were titanic shifts and events, such as the "Great Leap Forward and "Cultural Revolution," that we did not anticipate. Yet no one really did; it would have been a miracle if we had.

When I arrived in Hong Kong, the PRC was suffering from the collapse of the "Great Leap Forward." That zany policy, begun in 1958, was an act of hubris on Mao's part that rapidly backfired into a major disaster for China. The intensity of forced agricultural production, the formation of massive communes, and the resort to crazy shortcuts - such as the melting down of every bit of cast iron to make useless backyard steel, deep plowing that quickly ruined the soil, etc - took a very heavy toll and thoroughly discredited the regime. Analysts say that as many as 20 million people may have starved to death. At least several millions died from man-made and natural disaster. I don't think anyone really knows, but it was really a cruel period for the Chinese people. North Korean policies some times remind me of Mao's.

A surprising number of people in the West were slow to recognize the insanity of the "Great Leap." During the initial fanfare a number of romantics, journalists, and even some in our intelligence community speculated that some elements of the "Great Leap Forward" might actually work; I thought they were nuts. After the collapse, a different crew of Westerners, following Taiwan's lead, postulated the possible demise of the PRC. This was less ridiculous but still dangerously misleading. I believe the consulate general's solid reporting contributed significantly to the commonsense views reflected within the government and much of the media.

Similarly I think we did a pretty good job in picking up bits and pieces of information in the aftermath of the "Great Leap," including various reforms with which the PRC was experimenting. Of course, we had far more difficulty trying to figure out what was going at the top. There appeared to be a serious struggle for leadership of the party and the government. Along with several others, I was quite sensitive to this most important issue; our best source for analysis was Chinese publications. I wish I had done my research more boldly because the "Great Leap Forward" was the precursor to the "Cultural Revolution" -another program devised by Mao over opposition from more pragmatic leaders. The first signs of the new upheaval appeared just as I was leaving Hong Kong. They looked peculiar to us and we reported them, never being able to relate one odd development to another with enough coherence, thereby failing to see the shape of the horrendous "Cultural Revolution." I kick myself for having failed to do that. Analyzing what was going on in Beijing's Forbidden City was very difficult for everybody in the outside world - and for most Chinese. But over the years, I think the consulate general deserves good marks for its analysis of the general situation in China.

Our track record on foreign policy matters was okay - probably a cut better than okay. We had a sound appreciation of Sino-Soviet relations - considerably more accurate than some in Washington. We had a fair understanding of the PRC's approach to Indochina as well as its military capacities.

Most important to me and in contrast to Embassy Taipei, the consulate general was open minded and relaxed in its approach to US policy toward China. Consul General Holmes, a distinguished newcomer to Asia who preceded Marshall Green, broke the taboos in talking about our policy toward the PRC, and from then on the consulate general openly pushed for a more pragmatic policy. Marshall Green did so in a variety of ways, and, as I have already mentioned, Ed Rice and I sent Washington a message similar to Holmes's, less elegant perhaps but written with considerable wisdom about Asia. Those messages would look pedestrian today; at the time they were quite bold.

I came into the Department in 1951, during the Korean war. I was deeply troubled by communist aggression on the peninsula and wrestled with what we might do. I was not happy about the course of events, but it seemed inevitable to me that in due time, we would have to establish relations with the PRC - in some form immediately to be followed by "normal" in due time. We were out of step with the vast majority of other countries. From the beginning of my foreign service career, I was uncomfortable with our PRC policy. It was a cloud over me at my early posts. Dutifully, I carried out US policy as best I could, but I was quite out of sympathy until 1971. This didn't mean I "liked" the PRC regime or that I condoned its crude pressure on the Nationalist off-shore islands or Taiwan. But since the PRC seemed well ensconced, I felt it was short-sighted not have some kind of relationship with it. When I was interrogated in early 1955 by Scott McLeod's investigators about my alleged sympathy toward the Chinese Communists (see remarks regarding my experience in S/S), I made the following comment: ...Concerning my own views on Communist China, I stated that communism and communism in China were an anathema and disappointment to me. Since the Chinese Nationalist Government was the one I grew up with and because of my family views, it was naturally the one I "supported." From 1945 to 1949 I was mad and sad about its ineffectiveness. After 1949-50 I began to think we probably would have to recognize Communist China diplomatically, as unpleasant and hostile as it was and would be. The Korean War removed this consideration. I went on to explain that at present it would be disastrous to recognize Communist China because of the tension surrounding Quemoy, Matsu, and Formosa, but I said I thought we should think through the problem for a future date...

These remarks are quoted from an angry memorandum I wrote to myself on February 3, 1955 to record of a most unpleasant experience. During the next 8 years in Taiwan and Japan I became thoroughly convinced the time had arrived to change an outmoded policy. I saw normalization with the PRC as a process that would develop over years, reflecting the new reality in East Asia, devoid of any adverse moral connotation, and following the practice of most of the world. The choice was simply this: should we have a perpetual wall between two important countries or did we have to deal with the reality of a communist regime in China. If the latter, then wouldn't it better to have official relations with it? Our existing policy closed its eyes to the facts on the ground. In addition, I thought that we were paying a penalty in having much of our dialogue with the PRC often conducted through third parties - the process of using an intermediary lost us opportunities and made for miscommunications because some of the third parties had their own agendas. I thought about and talked a lot about the consequences for the balance of power. In those days I did not foresee China shifting quickly from its hostility toward us, and I doubted a policy change would have a major beneficial effect on our dealings with the USSR. Yet I thought it would be a move in the in the right direction, and I was sure it would ease our relations with allies such as Japan.

It took Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger to put all the pieces in play - for their own reasons and in a strategic framework that exaggerated the benefits. When the breakthrough came with Kissinger's trip to Beijing in 1971, our obsession with "the menace of China" was replaced by an overly simple view of the PRC as part of a united anti-Soviet front. Like others, I understood the new policy in terms of our Cold War interests; I was happy that the US was finally going to normalize relations with the PRC. At the same time, I sensed that the anti-Soviet rationale for the opening to the PRC might be interpreted excessively and lead us to mishandle our relations with Beijing. It is a complicated subject, but I believe that I was right in these concerns, which came to the fore in both the Ford and Carter administrations; I participated in some of the discussions that I will get to later.

The change in US policy toward China should have made long before 1971-72, and we would have been better off if it had been done openly rather than in secret. Despite being pushed to the sidelines while Kissinger and Nixon did it, I am really grateful to them for their bold action. As for Consulate General Hong Kong during the 1960s, I would say we contributed significantly to preparations for the change - both through our analysis of the China context and our policy recommendations. A lot of energy went into the effort.

Friction in Sino-Soviet relations, which burst into public debate while I was in Hong Kong, fascinated everybody, even those in Washington who could hardly believe what was happening. It is hard to remember now the role of the Americans who fought so hard to interpret the Sino-Soviet "bloc" as two communist regimes both marching in the same direction mostly under Soviet leadership. From every scrap of information that we collected, it looked like these people were way off-base. CG Hong Kong deserves kudos for its quite objective picture of reality - portraying the tremendous strains between the PRC and the Soviet Union, which were heading toward a climax of some sort, with actual fighting to take place along their borders in 1969. In addition to the public diatribe conducted in the names of Khrushchev and Mao, there was all sorts of intelligence about troubles dating back to 1954 and earlier. For all its conviction about a Sino-Soviet monolith, I must say in fairness, that we were never instructed by Washington to hew any party line - unlike the editorial work by MacArthur in Embassy Tokyo or the censorship exercised in Embassy Taipei.

My own views on Sino-Soviet relations were importantly influenced during graduate school at Yale. When I was an undergraduate, I had an orthodox Cold War view of the problem. I assumed that Stalin and his cohorts played a major role in setting Asia's fires - which in fact they did. And I assumed China was cooperatively involved, as a kind of junior partner. But in graduate school I had a chance to do considerable reading on the earlier communist period that highlighted the independence of the Chinese communist movement. I became convinced, as some scholars had, that independence, rivalry, and friction were the reality between the two nations. Essentially, I thought that each would go in its own way, following its national interest more than ideology. That meant that on some issues, there would be a partnership, but often the two would find themselves on the opposite sides. By the time I reached Hong Kong, my views were pretty close to what historically seems to have been the pattern.

After a checkered record of support in the early years, the Soviets finally assisted Mao come to power in the late 1940s. But rarely did the Soviets do all they could have done. In the post-war period, the Soviets pillaged Manchuria for its industrial equipment and later demanded certain territorial concessions from the Chinese - including some of the same things the Russian Empire demanded of Imperial China in 19th Century. I was impressed by the replay of this clash of nationalisms. When the more obvious signs of strain began to appear - in the mid-1950s, and even more pronouncedly in the late-1950s with Khrushchev's public refusal to back Mao in the Taiwan Straits - I thought we faced two major powers that would go their own ways, guided, as I said, mostly by their national interests. Despite my analysis, I was still amazed in the late 1960s when they carried this behavior close to the point of a major war and sought to enlist our weight into the contest.

While I was in Hong Kong the consulate general also spent much time speculating how the Chinese would deal with various events in Vietnam and the Taiwan Straits. The Taiwan off-shore islands had again become a subject of US-PRC tension. The PRC was in bad shape economically. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) was suffering as a consequence of the "Great Leap Forward" and its aftermath; so it was hitting bottom as a consequential military force. At the same time, Vietnam was becoming an increasing problem for the PRC because of our military build up. The PRC sent substantial assistance to the North Vietnamese, a very complicated process. Given these conditions, there was discussion in Taiwan of taking advantage of the PRC's preoccupations and weaknesses through a variety of provocative actions. The U.S., as I remember it, made a statement, probably in the Warsaw or Prague Talks in 1963 or 1964, that we would not support any Taiwan action raising the level of tensions. That was well received by the PRC. These and other events gave us in Hong Kong an opportunity to assess the PRC's mind set and possible moves, which we did very conscientiously.

One of our most consuming and tricky challenges was to assess likely Chinese behavior in Vietnam. Washington was obviously concerned about what the PRC might do militarily if we intervened more directly in Vietnam. Stimulated by my Geneva Conference days, I tried to keep up with Indochina even though it was not part of my normal portfolio. While in Tokyo I had managed a rather long visit to Vietnam. I went twice while in Hong Kong and several times more after returning to Washington. I traveled to many regions of the country as well as Saigon, talked to all levels of the military, met at length with our embassy staff, etc.

In general, the consulate general, specifically including Rice and me, felt that the PRC was being very cautious and demonstrating little evidence of intention to intervene militarily. This was a crucial judgment on our part, because Washington was trying to assess how much risk we were running as we escalated our military presence in Vietnam from an advisory role to combat with US forces. Of course, we put in caveats - one being the obvious need to be prepared if our judgment proved wrong. Although I was fairly confident of our prediction, it bothered me personally. Effectively, we were assisting those in our government who favored deeper involvement in Vietnam. With a brief lapse in 1965, I was opposed to such entanglement.

Incidentally, our assessment of the PRC-Vietnam relationship got me into a running argument with those in INR and the intelligence community who worried about Chinese intervention as in the Korean War. Alan Whiting, who was INR's director for East Asia, disagreed strongly with us. He had written a famous book on the PRC's intervention in the Korean war; he tried to apply the same lessons to the Vietnam situation and came to an entirely different conclusion than I and most of my colleagues. Our debate conducted by cable got into the press from sources "who did not wish to be identified." I deduced and later confirmed that Whiting was briefing reliable journalists "on background." I did the same, giving the New York Times some good stories. In retrospect, I think we were both a bit foolish.

As for your question about our access to information and the degree of our influence in Washington, I would say that the consulate general was well served with information, while the effect of our recommendations was less than desired. Our analyses of the general situation in the PRC got broad circulation and were widely respected but they didn't reach the highest levels of the Department; they were fodder for the analysts in EA, INR and other parts of the intelligence community. We had some disputes with Washington over the national intelligence estimates which did not always match ours. CIA would tell us that we were wrong and they were right, if only because they had many more resources to devote to the PRC - and anyway, headquarters is always right! These disagreements were not a big problem for us; they were arguments among peers and we really didn't give that much of a damn about what the bureaucracy in Washington believed.

On issues affecting bilateral relations - on which we wrote some wonderful reports - the consul general often helped in their drafting and signed them out in his name. That plus restrictive circulation helped get attention - at least at the assistant secretary level. I don't know how they were viewed at higher levels; at least there was no attempt to stop us from our analysis or to tell us to hew the line.

On issues such as possible military engagement between the PRC and Taiwan or China and Vietnam, our reports were thoroughly read in Washington. We would get specific questions, some of which indicated certain biases, which was alright because we were not hemmed in our responses. In the case of US-Vietnam relations, I believe our important messages reached high levels in the government.

I also remember being impressed by how much traffic we received on Vietnam, including intelligence material. We were near Vietnam, but we had a detachment that our people in Saigon did not. So we some times submitted interesting comments, even though our immediate responsibility was the PRC. For example, after the Tonkin Gulf incident, Ed Rice inspired and supervised some careful analysis by our section plus the military attaches and CIA Station. As I recall them, our comments would look good today in light of what we have since learned about the incident. We were never convinced that there were in fact military clashes in the Gulf; we suspected that the US was seizing on isolated indicators to escalate our military intervention. We relied heavily on intercepts of Vietnamese communications, technical intelligence gathering, and Beijing's attitude. This intelligence was rapidly available to us in Hong Kong because we were part of the collection system.

I admired Rice for team efforts such as this one. In other instances he also signed off on messages, even the more strident ones and those he knew would draw opposition. I don't want to leave the impression that we were heroes in Hong Kong. Most often we were only one voice in the cacophony of noises emanating from groups of China watchers.

Let me address the question of how much influence the United States had on China during this time. In the 1962-65 period, our influence was significant. On the fundamental aspects of our policy - the embargo and containment of the PRC - although we could not control other countries, we severely complicated the PRC's efforts to broaden its relationship with the outside world. All of our military and economic goods, all of our technology as well as most of the developed world's military and technical exports, were deflected away from the PRC, thus impeding its economic and military development. As the leader of the "Free World," we did exercise a negative influence on the PRC, even if it meant an increasing tension with some of our allies who did not see the PRC as the enemy, as we did. Some aspects of this policy of denial - for example, the complete trade embargo - were inconsistent with my views on recognition of the PRC.

In the international sphere, our policy of not recognizing the PRC-keeping it out of the UN, handicapping it in all fora - was a joke - on us. We were kidding ourselves if we thought we could keep the PRC isolated for any length of time. Our policy was the dominant one in the developed world, but most countries found easy ways around it - as did many Americans. It was a doomed policy - just encouraging people to cheat. When the policy change finally came in 1971, everyone was ready for it.

As for the PRC's domestic policies, we had no visible impact. We probably provided the hard liners in the PRC with a justification for their policy. We may have had a negative impact on PRC domestic policies, helping hard liners take their crude approach to domestic issues as part of an anti-US campaign.

Three times - the Korean war, the off-shore islands crises, and Vietnam - we engaged in or threatened combat against the PRC. That certainly influenced Chinese views of the world around it. Although our ignorance helped to bring the Chinese into the Korean war, I have always felt - and still do today in light of historical documents now available - that we were right to assist South Korea defend itself in 1950. Over the longer term, our actions in Korea had a definite impact on PRC policies, influencing Chinese behavior on the off-shore island crises and in Vietnam. Our firm stance in Korea gave us some credibility in Beijing. In short our influence on the PRC was certainly heightened by our forceful military posture in East Asia; it compelled PRC policy makers to take our military presence into account.

I should make a summary statement on my tour in Hong Kong. Of all of the posts in which I served, except perhaps Korea which had some unique problems, I found that the intellectual quality of the consulate general work was outstanding. The consuls general insisted that the staff maintain an objective view and that contributed to enlightened reporting. My colleagues knew their stuff. Reporting from Hong Kong was very special; I don't think I saw that same level of insight again. The staff had a sense of participation on substantive issues that was great for everybody. The staff in Hong Kong was carefully chosen. It was a good team and worked well together. The intelligence community in Hong Kong was well integrated with the rest of the American staff. It was a good show. Even the military attaches, of which there were many, were part of the team, although they sometimes could be difficult with their own agenda. They had too much money and quite often ran clumsy covert operations without experience, thereby getting the U.S. government in trouble.

When I arrived in Hong Kong, Oscar Armstrong was the deputy consul general. He was followed by John Lacey. Both of them played a very useful role. They were excellent officers. As I mentioned earlier, Hong Kong had two separate entities: the "China watchers" - an embassy in exile - and those responsible for normal CG duties with the territory of Hong Kong. In that second category, we had a very active commercial operation. Then we had a large, sprawling intelligence community, which presented technical and legal challenges. The deputy CG was the keystone of keeping all in sync. I had a high regard for the officers under whom I served and for those whom I supervised.

Q: In 1965, you went to Harvard for Advanced academic studies, What was your desire?

GLEYSTEN: Yes. I don't remember the details how this assignment was made, but I believe that the Office of Personnel (PER) told me that on the next assignment cycle I would be slated for senior training. I had never been assigned to any training. Having been integrated into the Foreign Service from the Civil Service, I missed the initial training that most of my contemporaries had. That may have influenced PER.

Secondly, I had encountered Professor John Fairbank of Harvard, one of America's most distinguished scholars of China and an acquaintance of both my parents and parents-in-law. I found him fascinating. I remember that during a long cocktail party toward the end of my tour in Tokyo, he and I found refuge in a bedroom where we discussed a number of China issues, each with glass in hand. We never did circulate among the guests. He asked me whether I would be interested in a stint at the Fairbank Center at Harvard to write a paper or two and perhaps teach a course. A couple of years later I was asked if I would like to attend the Bowie Seminar at Harvard's Center for International Affairs. So with very attractive offers from academia and PER's determination, I was assigned to Harvard for senior training.

I was a fellow at the "Bowie Seminar" of the Center for International Affairs for the 1965-66 year and also attached informally to the Fairbank Center; I was pleased; in those days, the fellowship had some prestige. The seminar included fellows from the State Department and U.S. military services along with about 10 others from our NATO and Asian allies. Henry Kissinger was the director; he lectured to us twice and attended several of our presentations but was on sabbatical leave. Ralph Clough was the other State Department fellow. I divided my time roughly evenly between the two institutions which worked very cooperatively and have since been amalgamated.

I wasted a lot of time when I first got to Harvard, trying to adjust to a new life style, coping with a new baby, and lots of practical errands associated with return to the U.S. after more than 10 years overseas. Eventually, things fell into place, and I was able to get to academic work. I was really getting the hang of academia when the year came to an end. I had a productive time at Harvard. I felt the graduate schools there were superior to those of my Alma Mater Yale; I think the undergraduate schools were on an equal level.

I gave quite a few lectures at Harvard and undertook much public speaking in the Boston area on China and East Asia. Ezra Vogel in particular asked me to speak to a number of his classes. Most of the time I lectured on contemporary China and Asia. At the seminar I wrote a major paper on American China policy, which I have discussed before. I argued for a continuation of the current containment policy except for recognition of the PRC, which I thought should be carried out as soon as possible. I also favored abandonment of our ban on travel and non-strategic trade. If such measures helped bring about an evolutionary change in the harsh PRC regime, we could take additional steps - quite a cautious approach, yet out of line with U.S. policy. While I don't remember the details, I suspect my paper more or less foreshadowed the course we actually followed, since I was part of the emerging, new orthodoxy in China thinking. I do recall that the paper did not stress the Soviet factor; perhaps I should have covered that angle more extensively. But I certainly would not have gone as far as Nixon and Kissinger. I felt an effective triangular relationship between the U.S., USSR, and PRC needed balance, and might have to be carefully re-calibrated from time to time. If we leaned too hard in either direction, we would handicap ourselves.

Harvard in some respects was like a candy jar. There were all sorts of nuggets available. I was very busy studying and participating in the activities of the Bowie Seminar and Fairbank Center as well as the talkathon on Vietnam and Asia taking place at almost all schools including Harvard during those protest years. I concentrated on Asia but I made some effort to improve my knowledge of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Harvard had a good Eastern Europe program; I audited a number of courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. My various activities amounted to a full academic work-load. Of all the courses I took at Harvard the one that gave me most pleasure was taught by Benjamin Schwarz on the history of Chinese thought. Schwartz had wowed me during my Yale student days with a book entitled "Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao," a brilliant book that broke through to the reality of how the Chinese Communists came to power. He was a bit of a neophyte in his new realm of ancient history but I gained much insight from him.

The most difficult role for me at Harvard was one that State Department carved out for me. They quite frequently asked me to speak publicly in the Boston-Cambridge area in defense of U.S. policy toward Vietnam. I did so as well as I could, treating it as a duty, but as I have already said I was personally torn about what we should do in Vietnam. I had always been uneasy, if not opposed, to picking up the French colonial burden in Indochina. When Ngo Dinh Diem was overthrown, I remember telling my colleague Hey Isham in Hong Kong that this was a very worrisome development, because I thought it would lead to continuing and probably escalating U.S. involvement in Vietnam. That was one of my better predictions. While I recognized a Soviet and Chinese hand in what the North Vietnamese were doing, I considered the struggle in Vietnam largely as a civil war in which the communists had skillfully captured the nationalist mantle, leaving the South, and us, with residue of French rule. At the same time I recognized the risks of a communist take over and hoped it would fail.

Despite my pessimism about a successful outcome of the struggle, I had no moral problem with our intervention in Vietnam; I simply did not think we could win a contest with nationalism. I wobbled in this judgment for a brief period. While visiting our MAAG and embassy officers in Vietnam, I found most of them very positive about the "progress" South Vietnam was making in the military area. I remained dubious, but as I left Hong Kong in 1965, I thought President Johnson was probably right in deploying our marines to Da Nang. I soon reversed myself as I watched failure after failure of the South Vietnamese regime invite further escalation of our military actions. In short I was a skeptic of our policy and known among my colleagues to be one.

With views like these, it was tricky trying to publicly defend U.S. policy and actions. My basic approach was to highlight North Vietnamese aggression, not spend too much time on the wisdom of our response. It was an often uncomfortable role, less so if the audience was conservative, more so if it consisted of unruly protesters. Usually I would be part of a team of speakers or discussants. Quite often I went with John Fairbank; I would support U.S. policy while he made the case against intervention. Frequently, we would be joined by an extremist who would rant against our involvement in Vietnam; such person would invariably show up without tie, sloppily dressed, and violate the rules of polite discourse. At times, we were joined by a fourth panelist.

We held discussions on Vietnam before many different audiences. Some were large; I remember one consisting of 3,000 women professionals, the largest audience I have ever addressed. In this case the fourth speaker was Assistant Secretary of State Bill Bundy, whom I knew and liked but with whom I had considerable disagreement. Just before that occasion, Marshall Lin Biao, Mao Zedong's chosen successor, had published an article describing the world as the Chinese revolutionary scene writ large. The developed world or cities would be engulfed by the communist revolution in the third world or rural areas of the globe. This was great stuff for the U.S. administration struggling to justify what it was doing in Vietnam. In a brief pre-talk conversation, I told Bundy I thought Lin's article was rhetorical crap associated with the leadership struggle within China, not a sign that China was about to join the battle in Vietnam. I repeated this to the women in the audience; Bundy was less careful. On this occasion, Fairbank and I were on the same side. Usually, I did not share his views on the Vietnam; I thought that he was a bit naive on the subject.

The nadir occurred when I was asked by the Department to speak on a panel including my father-in-law, O. Edmund Clubb, an outspoken opponent of our Vietnam policy. This would have put me in the position of arguing in public with Clubb. That was not acceptable, and I told the Department I would not do it. It is one of the few times I rebelled against a Departmental order.

Not all the debate was public. Nor were all the Harvard crowd opposed to our actions. Some of the "peace nicks" at Harvard, who a few years later descended on Secretary of State Kissinger to protest the U.S. invasion of Cambodia, were hawks in 1965. At the Center for International Affairs, run that year by a mathematician, the preferred theory was one of "progressive escalation" in Vietnam. I spent considerable time arguing against these ideas that struck me as a recipe for disaster. These were good sessions and included some distinguished and experienced foreigners at the Center. I could express my personal views and did not have to defend the administration on matters on which we disagreed. Outside the Center, I was a more or less defender of U.S. policy. This duality was uncomfortable. On the other hand, I found audiences quite receptive to my arguments. Student groups were less sympathetic than the general public - the older the audience, the more sympathetic it was. General sentiment in the area was one of questioning: why are we in Vietnam?

Q: In 1966, you were assigned to Bureau for International Organizations (I.O.) as deputy director of the Office of UN Political Affairs (UNP). How did that assignment come about?

GLEYSTEN: While at Harvard, I asked PER what onward assignments might be available at the deputy office director level. I was told that the IO job might be available, along with several other potential vacancies. It sounded interesting to me. It is hard today to conjure up the ambience of the UN at that time. The UN was near its peak of importance - that is, just before its steep decline. In the second half of the 1960s, the UN was still a significant consideration in our policy. Compared to today, it received far more attention from the president and secretary of State; and we tried far harder to enlist support for our points of view. I thought the IO job would be lively. I knew Joe Sisco from my S/S days - he was a classmate of my colleague Dick Hennes and through that link, I got to know him. When we started we were all about the same level, but Joe soon left us far behind.

I think many people would share my view that IO's prominence in the 1960s reflected both the UN's importance and Joe Sisco's bureaucratic skills. His deputies were Bill Buffum and David Popper. While I was in IO, Buffum moved on to our mission to the UN; he was replaced by Popper. Toward the end of my tour, Sisco left to become assistant secretary for NEA. He was replaced by Sam DePalma in early 1969. I got along well with both men, which was important because my activities involved them so much of the time.

My immediate boss was Elizabeth Brown, a very capable officer and experienced in the UN world. While I was learning the ropes, Jock Dean was the senior deputy. I eventually replaced him, and Steve Campbell - an NEA expert and former Consul General in Jerusalem - took over as the second deputy. Elizabeth was sick for many months during my time in UNP, leaving me as acting director of the office. That required touching base with the front office all the time - more than I liked. The division of labor within UNP was complex, but it worked.

We provided political and strategic guidance to our UN Mission. Sometimes, it was just a matter of coordinating with other substantive bureaus of the Department so that the U.S. government would speak with one voice. Other times, we were more substantively involved, for example, in the resolution of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war - which was the most complex subject that we tackled. We operated in those tense days almost like an Operations Center with Sisco running the show in Washington and Arthur Goldberg in New York. I was just a frustrated leg-man for Sisco.

Sisco's domination of the process was pronounced. If he were involved in one of my subjects such as Chinese or Korean representation to the UN, he would call me on the phone directly and ask me to come to his office. That may have been efficient, but it left a lot of people out of the loop, particularly Elizabeth Brown. I tried hard to keep her filled in. She was very gracious about it. I found my informal relationship with Sisco satisfactory; I was always able to communicate my points of views on various issues. He didn't agree much of the time, but he heard me out.

My personal responsibilities were: the decolonization process, which fell primarily within the purview of the Trusteeship Council; Chinese representation; Korean representation; Arab-Israeli and African issues - the latter two subjects until Campbell came in. On some subjects, I knew little; I had to learn on the job. I felt quite vulnerable, but I approached each of my issues with as much common sense as I could muster. All in all, I think UNP demonstrated a competent grasp of the issues and had a good reputation in other parts of the Department. We were a kind of repository for knowledge about the UN, including the history of its behavior, which was sometimes an important consideration in the conduct of US policy.

Functionally, IO's main task was to seek a consensus in Washington on any given topic and then to instruct our delegation in New York. The mission would often try to squirm out of those instructions to join the crowd in New York. Washington was quite effective exercising control, and IO was remarkably successful in protecting its monopoly over this process. Sisco was very insistent about this and was able to force the bureaucracy to go through his bureau on all UN - and other international organization - matters. When a bureau tried to bypass IO, retribution was swift because Joe maintained excellent relations with the secretary as well as the White House and sometimes with the president himself. He was very good at that. Sam DePalma was not that close to the secretary; he had a different personality from Sisco - he was more intellectual - and the times were somewhat different.

Some of us were activists, especially in the areas which we knew well-e.g. East Asia for me. My background allowed me to play a significant role on Chinese representation. The same for Korean representation. It helped of course that I was familiar with the EA Bureau. As far as China was concerned, the U.S. government - or at least Secretary of State Dean Rusk - was determined not let "Red China" into the UN family, leaving Chiang Kai-shek's regime to represent all of the Chinese people. I found it very difficult to carry out this policy; along with many others I squirmed when I had to toe the U.S. line. Few other countries sided with us. The policy was built on a myth - Chiang Kai-shek could not possibly represent all of the Chinese people.

In the battles over this issue we worked as co-equals with the EA Bureau. Much of the EA Bureau shared my views, but those who didn't had powerful allies. In our inter-agency committee of NSC and State representatives, Ruth Bacon and Louise McNutt, both of the EA Bureau, were usually able to defeat all "bright new ideas" largely because they knew they would be backed the secretary who rejected the advice of "radicals" like me.

The high point in this contest occurred in 1967 or 1968. A number of us, including Bill Bundy's senior deputy, Win Brown, in EA favored a "two Chinas" representation scheme. Although it would have greatly improved our tactical position to advance such a formula, my guess is that the PRC in 1967 would have rejected our proposal; conceivably, it might have been more flexible ten years earlier. Knowing that the idea was an anathema to Secretary Rusk, the EA hierarchy was not in the mood for a major battle with Secretary Rusk, but being the main IO staffer on this issue, I decided to engage in some rather adventuresome free-wheeling.

I knew there was some inclination in the White House for a policy change, and I used my contacts to explore high level backing for a new approach. As I recall, my contacts were Al Jenkins, a Foreign Service officer who had the East Asia portfolio in the NSC, and Jim Thompson, who had come from Harvard during the Kennedy Administration and told me he thought Kennedy would have wanted to change our Chinese representation policy after the 1964 election. Thompson arranged for me to see Bill Moyers, who was a key aide to President Johnson. Moyers liked the idea of dual representation and thought it would appeal to the President. Although I am not absolutely sure, I believe Moyers got informal approval from the President.

The PRC under our suggestion would have had a seat in the Security Council and General Assembly; Taiwan would continue to have been represented in the Assembly. The Japanese and Canadians were anxious to have such a resolution passed - probably because they took so much heat from us on recognition and representation issues.

On my own initiative I approached the Canadians, keeping the IO leadership informed about what I was doing. Since I periodically hiked with a key member of the Canadian Embassy, I used that venue to exchange views informally. The Canadians proved eager to push the dual representation idea. Emboldened by my White House excursion and talks with the Canadians and Japanese, Sisco joined the effort to change the State Department's position. At a meeting with Acting Secretary Katzenbach, IO and EA, somewhat unbelievably, got his agreement to seek formal White House agreement to support a Canadian resolution calling for dual representation. I really thought I was a hero; even if rejected by the PRC, the new formula would have left us - and Taiwan - in a much better defensive position.

My illusions didn't last long. The secretary was out of the country at a NATO meeting when we went to see Katzenbach. As soon as he came back, Rusk swiftly over-ruled his under secretary, and I had the unhappy task of telling my Canadian and Japanese counterparts that we had failed. Dean Rusk was the complete boss on this issue. Despite Moyer's efforts, I doubt President Johnson cared that much about China. In any event, the PRC would have shot us down.

Because of my China experience, I was involved on the periphery of the Warsaw talks conducted between the PRC and ourselves. Although there was no direct UN connection, I was privy to what was going on in the Sino-US discussions - thanks to my colleagues in EA, particularly Paul Kreisberg who handled the staff work on those talks. In my UNP capacity I also worked on policy papers clearing through IO. When Nixon became President in 1969, Kissinger ordered a major study of the China situation - a tactic designed in part to ensure that the bureaucracy was deeply engaged in paper pushing while the NSC advisor was free to take his own actions in secret. I remember our producing a rather competent comprehensive paper on all aspects of our policy. It was make-work, but we didn't realize that until later. Our recommendations were sensible if modest in light of the major breakthrough managed by Nixon and Kissinger. I sustained this China connection when I moved to INR where I was in charge of the EA office. I vividly recall revisiting these Washington struggles when I learned in Taipei that Kissinger had traveled secretly to Beijing.

My most uncomfortable moments in UNP were during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. We were initially inclined to support a cease-fire calling on the forces of both sides to retreat back to their own lines. I firmly believed in that principle, and our legal advisor was very much in sympathy with it, but he was summarily over-ruled, because of strong opposition within the Executive Branch and Congress - most of it activated by Jewish communities in this country. Ambassador Goldberg insisted on a cease-fire in place, which left Israel with enormous amounts of captured Arab territory. His position and Sisco's "sensitivity" to the Jewish community in the U.S. reinforced White House instincts to allow the Israelis keep the conquered territory. I watched with dismay how the original U.S. position was transformed into the final one. Pressure was applied in Congress and throughout the government hierarchy. I have already mentioned Goldberg's role. In the White House, National Security Advisor Walt Rostow sounded like Netanyahu does today. I overheard some conversations between Sisco and Rostow which really demoralized me - it was legal and common practice for staffers to monitor calls in those days. I was naive about domestic politics in 1967. Nevertheless, I still feel that the U.S. could have handled the aftermath of the war so that Israel was protected without generating a major backlash in the Arab world and making the eventual settlement more difficult to achieve.

Another facet of the problem in 1967 was the speed with which a settlement acceptable to both sides would be enforced. To my astonishment, there was a rather shameless effort to slow the cease fire so Israel could consolidate its gains in Syria - at some risk of Soviet counteraction. IO played a major role in the entire crisis, because so much of the activity on the Arab side was at the UN. The Arabs enjoyed a large majority of supporters in the General Assembly, including the Soviets, and could pass pro-Palestinian resolutions. We used the Security Council and our considerable influence in general to block them. When I drafted talking points for Goldberg's use, they were usually changed by Sisco and others, much to my displeasure. I complained vociferously within the Department; I suspect that Sisco might well remember my behavior at the time. NEA officers often held views similar to mine, but of the senior officers in IO only Elizabeth Brown agreed with me. I learned a lot about the UN - and Washington - in a very short time.

Although I had a high regard for Sisco, which is clear in my remarks, I nevertheless realized he was an American apparatchik - on his way rapidly up the bureaucratic ladder and not inclined to spend much time indulging doubts about U.S. policy. David Popper was even less willing to stick his neck out. I frequently clashed with him in heated discussions on what U.S. policy should be. Sisco in his heart of hearts may have agreed with me, but he was not going to challenge the White House. Going along was an important aspect of success in the upper reaches of the bureaucracy.

UNP gave me a much stronger sense than my S/S experience of how domestic constituencies impacted on foreign policy and the need to take these into account if one were to be successful in dealing with a crisis. My first encounter was with the "China lobby," essentially an ideological struggle. The Arab-Israeli war demonstrated the power of a different kind of constituency, the ethnic or religious ones that are so prevalent today.

UNP also exposed me to bureaucratic cowardice; more than in my S/S days I found that a lot of people who felt as I did, did not speak up in important meetings on controversial issues and went along with administration policies, assuming they should not be blamed if things went awry. Both these phenomena discouraged me, but after a while, I accepted them as reflections of the world as it is.

After 1967, the value of the UN to the U.S. started to diminish, and there was an erosion of our interest in matters being confronted in New York. Americans were not happy with the way the UN had handled the Arab-Israel war. Many Americans, including my oldest and non-Foreign Service brother, sympathized with the apparent underdog. They felt the Arabs and Soviets had manipulated the UN in an effort to counter Israel's "plucky" behavior - and, of course, military superiority. The UN was down-graded and trampled over by many of our actions with a negative effect on the UN and its staff. But the 1967 war was not the underlying cause of the UN's downfall. I am more inclined to attribute the downward slide to the UN's unfortunate predilection to grow like Topsy; it had become top heavy and kept expanding more every year. Coupled with that was an aging leadership, inefficiency, as well as some corruption of senior officials. For example, economic development for the Third World was getting out of hand. It was a very expensive operation that was hard to justify in terms of significant accomplishment.

There were also a number of less important issues, like Micronesia, where the anti-colonial factions in the UN harassed us in New York on every aspect of our administration of those islands. That was not well received in Washington; nor were the continual attacks on our Vietnam policies. By this time, all of these issues had begun to wear on Washington and American society, generating a back-lash against the UN. I'm not sure whether it was a factor in Sisco's decision to move to NEA. Probably not. In any event, Sam DePalma handled this new situation with considerable aplomb, but no individual could have reversed the trend.

As part of my responsibility in UNP for Korean matters, I was part of the task force established after North Korea's capture of the USS Pueblo. We in IO were not central players, but New York was a communications point and there were UN aspects to be considered. For example, Goldberg was instructed several times to brief the Security Council with charts and other visuals - I remember preparing him for a complex presentation in the company of Sisco. It was a tense period; I did not participate in the final resolution - which I found quite humiliating for the U.S.. IO was involved only very peripherally; the key players were in EA and Defense - and the White House.

The UN Security Council was also convened to hear our bitter protests in 1968 when North Koreans agents tried to attack the Blue House - President Park Chung Hee's official residence. There wasn't much the US could do about this brazen attack which caused the South Koreans to yell bloody murder and cite it a reason why the North should never be allowed into the UN.

Understandably, these incidents raised the level of U.S. Government concern about North Korea. In the 1950s and early 1960s, we tended to believe that stability on the peninsula could be maintained effectively by deterrent force - the South Koreans plus U.S. forces along and near the border; we still had a powerful military presence at the time. If there were problems with Pyongyang, we used Soviet - and sometimes Chinese - intermediaries to remind the North Koreans of the danger of escalation. We assumed that the PRC and the Soviet Union would help keep their "client" under control, although we were less confident of this after the bitter the Sino-Soviet rift. In the case of the Blue House raid, however, both the PRC and the Soviet Union seemed surprised by North Korean's behavior. They appeared to have less control than we had assumed, and the attacks suggested there were real adventurers within the North Korean leadership who did not mind taking big risks.

The Blue House raid was a foolish and dangerous adventure that did not endear the North Korean regime to anybody. And it came very close to success! Years later as ambassador I was amazed when I was shown how a substantial North Korean force managed to breach South Korean defenses, enter Seoul, and reach within a few hundred meters of the Blue House before they were detected. That particular action, following so soon after the Pueblo, really hardened our views on the North and made us more vigilant and even less willing to compromise with a rogue regime. Despite this, I thought then - and still do today - that a serious military threat from the North could continue to be deterred by maintaining sufficient strength - and without being overly provocative.

On Micronesia, Don McHenry, a UNP recruit from Kennedy days who had been deeply involved in trusteeship issues long before I, briefed me and taught me all I know. The UN atmospherics were poor, because we were always defending ourselves against attacks from the more revolutionary, anti-colonial countries - mostly African ones. It was a very unpleasant experience, particularly in the General Assembly's "Committee of 24" - which was larger than the Trusteeship Council and far less courteous. That Committee included the worst rabble rousers in the UN. I pushed hard for a decision to withdraw from the Committee, where we were just cannon fodder for communist-supported radicals. This gradually became a majority opinion, and we finally walked out of the Committee of 24 shortly after I left IO. In fact, once we pulled out, the diatribes virtually ceased - there was no longer any target except the French.

There were some important issues associated with our role in Micronesia. Technically, we were responsible to the Trusteeship Council for our stewardship of the islands. That requirement was not part of the UN Charter, but we had voluntarily submitted Micronesia to Trusteeship Council supervision. In the Department of State, IO was the lead bureau for Micronesia; effectively, we were the "Micronesia Desk," but the Department of the Interior really ran the show. It appointed governors, determined the use of resources, more or less monopolized dealings with the Congress, etc. We couldn't do anything without Interior's support. The Interior Department's staff was mediocre and hard to convince.

Micronesia was a collection of island groups that we had captured or recaptured from the Japanese. They were gradually being weaned and encouraged to move towards self-government. In keeping with Trusteeship Council sentiment we treated the disparate islands as a single unit, and our over-riding concern at the time was to keep the islands as US territory for security reasons. That brought DoD into the mix of Washington bureaucracies working on Micronesia. The military wanted access to the islands, regardless of their legal status. Micronesia was a critically important test site for nuclear weapons and missile programs. On the political side there was some concern that an independent Micronesia might ally itself or be suborned by an unfriendly power such as the USSR. Japan was also thought to have undue influence as a result of WW II relationships and a generous aid program. So the discussions in Washington on Micronesia tended to be quite vigorous.

Defense had sensible people dealing with Micronesia. For the most part, one might say that they were even enlightened. Many of the Interior representatives in Washington had at one time or another been part of the paternalistic administrative staff in Micronesia during the early post war period or learned their ways from working with Indian reservations. The governors, when they came to town, would meet with us, and I found that they too had relatively little understanding of the political situation in Micronesia or the UN. Much of what they thought was just plain wrong. So we had a very troublesome relationship with the Interior staff. But we kept plugging away and eventually came to agreement of proposals to be presented to the Trusteeship Council. Specifically, we had to somehow permit the Micronesians to exercise genuine self-determination, including the option of independence, while making sure that the vote would come out our way-i.e. stay with the US.

I was never able to visit Micronesia, and I regretted it, because each part of the territory had its own views and unique problems. I did meet a number of Micronesians -introduced to me by McHenry, giving me some feel for the local situation, which was somewhat unstable. There were half a dozen island groups and many different forces at work on the political system. I have already mentioned the uninspired and vision less Interior staff as well as the security concerns of Defense. Added to this mix, was Congressional anxiety about the possibility of an American territory voting in favor of "independence."

Congress was not generous to Micronesia. They tended to neglect it in a way that reminded me of our treatment of Native Americans. To its credit, the Executive Branch thought a little generosity in advance would go a long way in heading off radical solutions in the future. Congress was only half convinced by this argument. Congressional oversight was exercised mostly by the House Insular Affairs Committee, which was very jealous of its portfolio and always wanting high level officials to appear before it rather than fellows like me. Among several contenders for the title, Congressman Ed Koch was the most obnoxious. For a very brief period, I was one of the two experts in the Department on Micronesia. There wasn't much interest on the subject in the Department. Getting seventh floor attention was extremely difficult.

There were some less prominent factors that ultimately proved to be the key ones. Among those I would list the divisions within Micronesia - the differing attitudes of people living on different islands; relations or to some extent rivalry with other territories such as Guam and other Pacific islands; the attitudes of Australia and New Zealand which were essentially Micronesia's neighbors and had relatively good track records on island administration; and the Japanese with their trade, aid, and tourists. So we had a complex situation which was frustrating at times, but always challenging.

I must say that during my watch, there was very little advance on the question of Micronesia's future status. We went back and forth on the options, but nothing was ever decided definitively. As a general proposition, the U.S. government worried about Micronesian independence, although there were individuals here and there who supported the idea. Some of our staff in New York seemed overly devoted to the principle of self-determination. McHenry may have leaned the same way; he had been dealing with de-colonization in Africa and that undoubtedly had an impact on his views of Micronesia. The Department of State's main concern was that the U.S. government not violate the UN charter. Rather cynically, we envisaged a carefully organized act of self-determination, lubricated by substantial assistance to ensure the right result. To put it bluntly, we were prepared to be accused of using a fig leaf. In those days EA had practically no interest in the subject, leaving IO to take the lead.

While IO had little direct responsibility for Indochina, domestic controversy over our Vietnam policy boiled over during the years I was in UNP. As I have explained elsewhere, I was very uneasy over our entanglement, and by this time I was eager to find a decent or semi-decent way out. At the same time I objected to the behavior of the often mindless militants on our streets. I never joined the public outcry; I always tried to be disciplined and fight internally for my views. I don't think I was a hero in this process.

A few months before the Tet Offensive, Sisco had me accompany him during a week's visit to Vietnam where we received VIP treatment, getting all over the place and seeing all the important Americans, including Ambassador Bunker, General Westmoreland, and many regional commanders and advisors. I remember being impressed with the massiveness of the American intervention and the extent of real dedication. Yet, victory seemed impossible; the prospect was for a long drawn out contest that could not be sustained politically back home. Westmoreland struck me as an unbright, uninspired officer with ideas that would only dig the hole deeper. At the time he wanted to "cut" the Ho Chi Min trail using "just two additional US divisions," which he was requesting, to establish a cordon sanitaire across Vietnam and Laos. His own chief of staff told me it was a loony idea. I helped Sisco write his report to Secretary Rusk; it was less outspoken than it would have been under my name. The malaise of Vietnam was beginning to color all our work in 1967-68; it was a profoundly depressing period.

I would like to say a few words about the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that was negotiated while I was in IO. Gerry Helman headed up a small office in UNP on arms control matters. I became peripherally involved because of my knowledge of Japan and other Asian countries. My brother Culver was a key person in ACDA on this matter; he and Sisco often talked to each other without reaching agreement. That made my role somewhat uncomfortable, caught between my boss and my brother. Culver was pushing very hard to get approval of the NPT, as was Sisco. I no longer remember why they were always fighting; I think Culver thought we were being too soft on the Japanese who were trying to water down the Treaty. In any event, several times I undertook a peace mission, the price paid for being one of three brothers in the Foreign Service.

By 1969, I had come to the conclusion that the UN was an essential attribute for carrying out the burdens of the developed world. The issue which had the greatest impact on me was the Arab-Israeli war and the UN's role in resolving some of the issues arising from it. My experience suggested that the UN was an important institution, but not as important as Sisco and Goldberg thought and argued. In fact, it was clear that both in the Administration and Congress there were sufficient numbers of skeptics to limit our participation in the UN. These forces kept us on a short leash and I didn't see any prospect that the situation would change for the better. This was a kind of realpolitik limitation.

There were nevertheless important UN functions. I thought the annual ministerial meetings in New York were important; in the late 1960s those meetings were much more substantive than they have become. We did not have the G-7 or all the other meetings of today, so that the annual New York sessions were really valuable. I agreed with the cliché that if the UN did nothing else, these annual meetings made it a worthwhile institution.

I also thought that the Security Council debates were worthwhile, unlike the General Assembly which was already out of control. The speeches and actions of the Assembly made no contribution whatsoever to the maintenance of world stability. Their inflammatory rhetoric provided ammunition to anti-UN members of Congress.

Unlike today, the media gave considerable coverage to UN affairs. When a major event occurred - the war in the Congo, seizure of the *Pueblo*, blow ups in the Middle East, or communist crackdowns in Budapest and Prague - UN proceedings were headline news and the subject of prime time network discussion. Full texts of the US Delegate's remarks were carried by major newspapers. The UN was a real player on the international stage. The UN also got lots of credit for peace-keeping. I was an optimist about that process, which I thought would become increasingly important.

There was another area where I hoped the UN might prove useful as a kind of umbrella. That was disarmament and arms control. Unfortunately, the organization did not rise to the challenge; it played some helpful roles, as in the NPT, but was generally upstaged by great power negotiations.

The abuses in the UN that later caused a backlash in the US were fairly prevalent by the end of the 1960s. The UNDP was established while I was in IO, and I could see disaster ahead for all UN development programs. The UN budget kept going up; the Soviets and others refused to pay their share thereby raising the assessment of others. The other factor in the UN's slide was the negative role of the Soviets in the Security Council enforced by their veto. Ironically, we now fail to pay dues, provide little aid, and use the veto quite freely.

Unfortunately, the limits of the UN were also pretty apparent. When it came to any kind of governmental function - chapter seven peace keeping - that involved military action, the UN faded into the background. Other countries took on the burden - sometimes in the name of the UN. By the end of the 1960s the UN held only modest promise. I was concerned that it would end up like the League of Nations.

Q: In 1969 you became the Director of EAP in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR). How did you get that job?

GLEYSTEN: I was restive after three years in UN/P. Although there wasn't a logical vacancy in the EA Bureau, I was anxious to return to East Asia, and Tom Hughes, the head of INR, managed to convince me that INR would be a good East Asian assignment. I didn't know Hughes but he seemed to be aware of my record; I think Joe Yager, then a member of S/P, might have mentioned me to him. My immediate predecessors in INR, John Holdridge and Alan Whiting, also may have been involved.

As these things happen, by the time I actually reported to INR, Hughes had left and was replaced by Ray Cline. Ray had been the CIA station chief in Taiwan toward the end of my first tour in Taiwan. Later, I saw a lot of him in Hong Kong when he was the director of the EA Division at CIA. I considered Cline a member of the rambunctious school of policy advocates - often entertaining dangerous ideas. That perception gave me pause because I didn't think that he and I could work on the same wave-length - particularly on China/Taiwan, Vietnam, and Cambodia. When I spoke to him about my reservations, Cline assured me that we wouldn't have any problems, and that is how it worked out, except possibly in one or two instances. He always forwarded my memos to the secretary or other senior officers; he never refused to see me. I think we had an "okay" to "good" relationship. I appreciated his willingness to sign off on documents with which he might not have agreed. In general, I sensed that he respected me.

David Mark, one of Cline's deputies, more or less supervised our work on Asian matters. He was unfamiliar with the Asian scene and sometimes tiresome, but he was intelligent. INR mimicked the structure of the geographical bureaus and some of the functional ones. INR tried to maintain overall integration of operations through weekly staff meetings and other devices. However, most of our dealings were with the regional bureaus, CIA, and the Defense intelligence organizations - the so called intelligence community.

I was lucky to have an outstanding deputy, Evelyn Colbert, a shrewd East Asia hand and veteran of the intelligence community. She had been a deputy to several of my predecessors and probably would have outshone all of us as the office director. She devoted lots of time to my training, and as much as possible I tried to treat her as an equal. Evelyn stood out for her sharp mind, intellectual rigor, and common sense. She was also a superb editor, who helped the whole staff, myself included, with our extensive writing. Although I thought I was a fairly good writer, I quickly learned that she could improve my work.

We had 15 to 20 analysts working in INR/EAP. This was the first time that I had been fully responsible for such a large staff. When I was the acting chief of section in Hong Kong I had considerable supervisory responsibility, but in INR I was the designated person with responsibility for hiring, firing, and performance. Our biggest contingent worked on Indochina and the next largest was devoted to China and Taiwan. The staff included some very talented people; they performed well and worked very hard - much of the time autonomously. Their analysis was often done with little supervision from me. I concentrated on problem areas; i.e. China, Vietnam, and Korea.

In my INR days, I spent quite a bit of time counseling, recruiting and writing efficiency ratings. At times I was a bit tough on individuals, perhaps applying standards of excellence that I later realized were unrealistic. As always in the government, I was expected to keep most of the staff I inherited, but there was some turnover. Getting first class replacements, especially from the Foreign Service, was difficult but not impossible. INR was not considered a jazzy assignment.

One of Evelyn's most useful assets was her grasp of staff capabilities and liabilities. Well before I assumed my new duties, she told me bluntly what she thought should be done to improve the staff, particularly removal of people who clearly were not carrying their weight. Although she had tried to get Holdridge to act, he did not get around to it before his departure. I also postponed any drastic moves until I could reach my own independent judgment. However, I soon reached the same conclusion as Evelyn. After great moral anguish and a cumbersome bureaucratic process, I managed to have two fairly senior officers transferred out. Both worked on Indochina - one was the head of the South Vietnam unit, an experienced civil servant, a nice man, and very knowledgeable about Vietnam. He was, nevertheless, unable to get much out of his relatively large staff. He also suffered from indecision. Since we were at war in Vietnam, our intelligence judgments were important to the Department's senior officials. If we could not support one point of view or another, our value was severely diminished. Mostly we got promises of reports and few deliveries. I felt very badly about what I did to him, but he bounced back and eventually retired from INR as a deputy office director.

The other individual was new to East Asia, having been recruited from propaganda agencies working on East Germany and the Soviet Union to help us decipher what the communists in Hanoi might be thinking. He was full of theories, couldn't focus, and never produced anything useful, not even in his oral comments. I got him transferred, despite some strong pressure from EA not to do so - personal friendships. I suggested EA take him on, which they declined, and he ended up in the NSC where he worked without distinction in a number of offices. These removals, the first I had ever initiated, were most distressing to me; from the viewpoint of the system, the individuals were serious liabilities; from the viewpoint of the individuals, we were hurting people who thought they were making a contribution.

Even before my assignment I had developed some "feel" for INR's role as a result of my Hong Kong days where I was a recipient of - and distant contributor to - INR's product. I also had some contact with INR from Tokyo as well as in IO. I knew what INR was supposed to do and what it produced. I always assumed that its most important function was to keep the secretary informed of significant intelligence and analytical developments. This was the aspect of the job that often brought me into direct contact with Ray Cline.

Almost as important as keeping the Department's senior officials informed, we were responsible for liaison with the intelligence community. We tried to ensure that the intelligence product was as good as it could be - despite powerful tendencies to leave debates unresolved with footnotes or bridged with fuzzy language. Evelyn took the lead in the CIA liaison function. Occasionally, I would get involved in areas of special interest to me.

Although I initially thought that our principal client would be the secretary, I soon found that one of our most important collaborators was the EA Bureau. Marshall Green was the assistant secretary and I briefed him every day and gave him a selection of materials to read. He rarely missed these meetings; when he was otherwise occupied, he would call me sometime during the day to come to his office. He was frank with me and used me as a sounding board. We had many discussions about policies and events in EA. I or a member of my staff attended EA staff meetings. Marshall would often task us to do research and analysis - sometimes collaboratively with EA, sometimes on our own. He valued our contributions as a means of corroborating or challenging information that he was receiving from others.

As far as the seventh floor was concerned, we didn't get tasked very much by the secretary or his principals, leaving us room to choose subjects that we thought would be of interest. I focused mostly on China and Vietnam. In the case of China, I hoped our analysis of China's international behavior and domestic developments, particularly shifts in the Chinese leadership, might have some impact on our policy vis-a-vis the PRC. Nick Platt, who had worked with me in Hong Kong, was very good at extracting essential information for our clients. In the case of Vietnam, we tried hard to convey objectivity, often struggling against the tendency of Defense, CIA, Embassy Saigon, and our own Ray Cline to justify our policy in the face of doubtful data.

We drafted many memos on these and other topics. Perhaps a few of them got into the secretary's hands, but most were read by seventh floor staff or used by Cline in his briefings. Occasionally, we would get a request to supplement a memo to the secretary. I must say that I got relatively little satisfaction from the small result of this time consuming process. With the partial exception of Ray Cline, INR was quite remote from seventh floor policy deliberations.

There were a few occasions when the secretary wanted a briefing on an EA subject and Cline would take me along with him as a senior staff member and information resource. I remember trying to brief Secretary Rogers and the deputy secretary on Cambodia in the wake of our "incursion" into that country. Before he became secretary, I had worked with Rogers in IO when he was brought in to serve in some capacity in the UN South African effort. He was a bluff, pleasant man who usually didn't realize how easily he was bypassed by Kissinger. In this case, he was stunningly ignorant of what we were doing or its implications - even though he had theoretically been consulted by the White House. I suspect both my disapproval of this retrograde action and my cynicism about capturing the communist headquarters were fairly transparent. But I was asked back several times to continue the story of how our military forces were frustrated in their quest. The briefings at least permitted Secretary Rogers to keep up appearances with NSC Advisor Kissinger. I think we saw all of the intelligence community's output. In any case, Evelyn Colbert and I were exposed to more sensitive material than most people working on East Asian matters. We were cleared to see all varieties of classified material - much more than we could possibly absorb. The avalanche of paper created major management problems for me. We could only read the highly sensitive material in our special file room; Evelyn would usually comb through it first and then I would select material to show Green. Without others pre-selecting stuff for us, we would have spent the whole day in the file room. There was some compartmentalization within the staff; analysts did not have access to special materials that were not germane to their work; only Evelyn and I had across-the-board access.

Our analysis was based essentially on the wide variety of reports received, although most of the staff were fully familiar with their areas of specialization through service abroad, education, and travel. Occasionally, some of them were detailed for short periods to a foreign post, such as Saigon, but that was infrequent. I traveled a little bit myself.

INR was not in the policy chain of command. Its influence, if any, came from the authority of its interpretation of what was happening and what might happen to affect policy considerations. In meetings with the secretary and others, I'm sure Ray Cline felt free to argue for or against policies, and, as I will discuss later, I did this orally with Marshall Green and less senior people in the Department. Our written product, however, was supposed to have a policy neutral tone. Even if we were being selective in our focus and deliberately highlighting certain dangers or opportunities, our written comments did not contain policy recommendations. Any policy views were implicit. Almost all of our product, whether a regular intelligence report or special memo, religiously observed this rule, giving our product an unbiased look - but also reducing its attraction to busy operators.

There were exceptions to this practice. If the secretary were to ask Ray Cline about some issue, Cline might ask us to draft a response touching directly on policy choices. I would carefully review such draft with Ray who tended to tone down our views, but usually allowed a semblance of them to survive in our final product. More frequently than the secretary, Marshall Green would ask for policy comments from the perspective of an "objective" intelligence analysis. Most of our responses to these queries were oral, but some were written. I did not need to clear this kind of response with our front office; I felt free to speak my mind and to let our analysts do the same, even if I did not agree with their conclusions. I could, of course, make my own views clear one way or another. I doubt that this policy effort made a great difference to the course of events, although I like to think we made a useful contribution to sensible decisions. In any event, it was always clear to our consumers which of our products was straight analysis and which was policy commentary - each was labeled.

By the time I got to IO and then INR, I had an opinion on many of the hot issues. It is very hard for an analyst to be completely objective when his or her mind is bent in a certain direction. Although, as I have said, we did our very best to be objective in our written assessments, I felt far freer to be opinionated in oral comments. For example, I was a longstanding proponent of formal relations between the US and the PRC, and in my IO days I sometimes pushed this view to the annoyance of my superiors - who to their credit never censored me.

When Nixon came in, I was concerned that we were about to go backwards; having overlooked his famous 1967 article in Foreign Affairs, I viewed him too simply as a strong anti-communist who would never deal with the PRC. Of course, we had no inkling of Nixon's and Kissinger's machinations. NSMs kept coming from the White House; studies were tasked and recommendations options prepared - in part to throw the bureaucracy off the track. Because we feared a conservative backlash from Nixon, we were pretty timid in the recommendations of these papers. But we did manage to get some good ideas into the analysis and we hoped we could at least work on the assistant secretaries - and by influencing them perhaps influencing the policy makers on the seventh floor.

I lobbied quite vigorously with Marshall on the question of PRC recognition. I made clear that normalization with the PRC should take place without undermining Taiwan, because we had a responsibility for its security as part of our long-range strategy in Asia. Marshall heard me out with great sympathy. Both of us thought we were doing our duty, and we were both completely unaware of goings on in the White House. Marshall and the whole Department were cut out of Nixon's and Kissinger's secret maneuvers on China. Nixon and Kissinger took the boldest steps of all options; our timidity must have amused them. I didn't learn about any of this until I after I had left INR and arrived at my next assignment in Taipei in 1971.

Although this central policy issue was always on my mind, most of our China efforts were devoted to such matters as Chinese policy toward Indochina, Sino-Soviet relations that had ratcheted dangerously towards war, and obscure but important leadership developments during the latter phases of the Cultural Revolution. Even if it was hard to document, change was in the air. The Soviets began a massive buildup of forces on the Chinese border, and the Chinese responded with a considerable buildup of their own forces, including construction of huge fortress-like structures that were fascinating to our intelligence community. In this tense atmosphere the Soviets tried to inveigle us into colluding with a nuclear threat to China. Out of the same fear, the Chinese were being more responsive in their talks with us in Warsaw, through "ping pong diplomacy" - and, completely unbeknownst to us, in their dealings with Nixon and Kissinger.

I was less organized about my views on Indochina. Even though I never considered myself a specialist in the area, I was very interested in Vietnam, which had become so central and pivotal to our foreign policy. My first brush with Vietnam was during the Geneva Conference in 1955, which I described earlier. After I returned to S/S, I worked for a while with Ambassador McClintock, an articulate and cock-sure Foreign Service officer who had just returned from being charge in Saigon. He was working with the JCS on post-Geneva arrangements. I may be doing him a disservice, but he seemed to me to be insufficiently critical of the French record in Indochina and too comfortable with our taking over their role through military assistance etc. I opposed that approach very strongly, as I had in Geneva. I felt the problems in Indochina should not and could not be solved by more colonialism. I argued for staying out of Indochina.

I have already talked at some length about my views on subsequent developments. While in IO I had become convinced the President would have to disengage from Vietnam either through the Paris talks or unilateral measures. I can't remember all the stages through which this general feeling led me to favor relatively rapid withdrawal from Vietnam. The Guam Doctrine, for which Marshall Green claimed some credit, and growing talk of "Vietnamization" were portents of the way we were likely to move, and I reacted favorably to the approach. But the process seemed to be dragging out too long, and by the time of our Cambodian venture in 1970 I was convinced we needed to expedite our withdrawal. Although I had no confidence the South Vietnamese would be able to hold off North Vietnamese encroachment, I saw no alternative that would be tolerated by the American public. Complete withdrawal seemed the only way out of a messy situation. Many people would suffer, but I discounted prophecies of dominoes falling throughout Southeast Asia. I was confident that the communists would be constrained by nationalist rivalries and healthier conditions in most other countries.

This was the basic trend of my thoughts about Vietnam, but I did not feel sufficiently clear in my own mind to join any crusade in Washington. I never believed we were "morally" wrong to engage ourselves in Vietnam even if we were unwise to do so; I did not have friendly feelings toward the communist forces attacking South Vietnam; and I had real distaste for the protest tactics being employed in Washington and elsewhere in the nation. The closest I came to public protest was to write a letter resigning from the American Foreign Service Association, because its president and journal took the unusual step of publicly endorsing the administration's actions in Cambodia and Vietnam. However, I was never associated in any way with the group who chose to resign from the Foreign Service - and return in high places when the war was over.

Ray Cline was far more supportive than I of the administration as were many members of my members of my staff. There was no prevailing doctrine among us. I discussed my ideas with Marshall Green and others in EA, doing so more by expressing deep skepticism about what we were trying to do in Indochina than by arguing with strong conviction about my alternative thoughts. Moreover, most of the time we were not writing about or even discussing grand strategy. Instead we were reporting on the lamentable quality of the South Vietnamese administration and army, the counterproductive aspects of the harsh tactics employed by our South Korean military allies in their search and destroy missions, the "successes" or "failures" of this or that operation or program. Enormous amounts of time were consumed in arguing about the effectiveness of our military operations, including efforts to interdict the Ho Chi Minh trail.

I also mentioned Korea as a special interest. I wanted us to examine the changing relationships between the PRC, the Soviet Union, the US, and Japan. We could see the shifts in PRC views towards us - even before the Kissinger visit to Beijing. I wondered whether these shifts in the regional equilibrium might have an influence on the Korean Peninsula, particularly the North. I kept prodding our analysts to be on the lookout. I assumed that the changing relationships in the communist world might have a beneficial impact on the Korean Peninsula, and I hoped that any shifts might allow the North to seek better relations with the South. Some contacts eventually took place with North-South Korean talks in 1972 after Nixon's visit to China. But in the late 1960s and beginning of the 70s I must say that we kept looking in vain. All we heard on both sides of the DMZ was a hard line.

After the Pueblo incident and attempted North Korean raid on the Blue House, North Korea shot down a US reconnaissance plane. The Nixon administration talked tough, but didn't do much. I was struck by apparent Soviet sympathy for our position and the lack of traditional Chinese support for the DPRK. These shifts were not enough to affect to alter the mind set in Pyongyang.

Economic issues were not one of our direct responsibilities, and I did not focus on this important aspect of what was going on in East Asia. I was, of course, fully aware of Japan's rapid growth, and I began to appreciate the surprising degree of progress in Taiwan and South Korea - a change that significantly intensified my interest in these two countries where I subsequently served.

Like IO, my INR experience reinforced my view on the importance of being imaginative about ways of getting one's views considered at higher levels. I didn't rule out resorting to channels outside the prescribed process - although I recognized that couldn't be done too often. This applied to my staff as well as to me. If they wanted to use an unorthodox channel, I was prepared to cooperate if they could make a convincing case. In my own case, I used all channels available to get my point of view to the policy makers, even if the intervention was extra-curricular. I should note that I was never really in the chain of command on Vietnam issues. I did get sucked into the edges of the quagmire in the mid 1960s. By the time I left INR our presence in Vietnam had reached its zenith and the downward slide was under way. When I became one of EA Assistant Secretary Phil Habib's deputies in 1974 our presence in Vietnam had already become extremely tenuous. My main advice on Vietnam was to get out faster before our domestic struggle spread its damage beyond Vietnam.

Of the six years I spent in the US after my Hong Kong stint I spent less than two years in INR, one of my shortest assignments. I suspect I am remembered by some of my colleagues there as a kind of transient, and I might have been more effective if I had stayed longer. Nevertheless, I took a job many people ducked, and I tried to give it my best. In terms of my own experience it was good training for later work in the EA Bureau.

Q: In 1971, you were assigned as DCM of our Embassy in Taipei. How did that come about?

GLEYSTEN: When my tour in INR was coming to an end, I asked Marshall Green whether there were any opportunities for me in the Far East. He sent me to Paul Cleveland, who was then his executive assistant. Paul asked whether I would be interested in the DCM position in Taiwan. I jumped at the chance.

There was a possible hitch. I had known Ambassador McConaughy since Tokyo days and got along well with him, but his views and mine were quite disparate on the issue of policy toward the PRC. Marshall doubted that this would be a barrier; I wanted to ask McConaughy personally. So I wrote him a letter. His reply was gracious. Acknowledging our differences, he said that he respected my views and did not believe they should adversely affect our working relations. I found that to be generous to a fault; I don't think I would have accepted a DCM with views so different from mine.

As I reflect back on my second tour in Taiwan, four things come to mind: the striking change within the embassy from the intellectually constipated, conservative administration of Rankin to the humane if still conservative approach of McConaughy; the stunning shift in our China policy that coincided with my arrival; political changes within Taiwan; and the beginnings of real prosperity on the island.

In contrast to the 1950s, my policy views were never an issue during the second round; Ambassador McConaughy treated me as trustworthy. We disagreed openly about normalization of relations with the PRC and later we disagreed on what was going to happen to Taiwan. These were gentlemanly disagreements. To some extent, I think McConaughy - by now about 62 - understood that a new era in policy was emerging and that he belonged to a generation that was passing from the scene. In any event, he was showing his age. He no longer defended his position with the verve he used to display. He had already decided this Taiwan assignment was to be his last, and he allowed me - even encouraged me - to do things that I, had I been ambassador, would have reserved for myself. For example, I wrote the commentaries on reports of his meetings with Premier Chiang Ching-kuo and his father, President Chiang Kai-shek. I tried hard to avoid any obvious disjuncture with his opinions, but inevitably there was a new flavor of the changing times. I suspect Washington may have been amazed sometimes by the ambassador's commentaries which were much more in tune with its thinking than previously. The same was true for assessments of developments in Taiwan and the region. He let me proceed with my analysis and encouraged me to express my views, for example in a briefing of Congressmen where we were both present. I never dared ask him why he was giving me so much leeway, but I don't think our differences led to any serious problems and they may have well have served a useful purpose.

Our staff knew of our differences. Political section officers more or less shared my opinions, and if they encountered difficulties with the ambassador, they would come to me, assuming I could take care of it. Bill Morell, the economic counselor and a very savvy older officer who had been in Taiwan for quite a long time, understood the economy far better than I and also felt confident of his political grasp. Of the key officers he was the only one who leaned decidedly in the ambassador's direction. There were a few occasions early on when he felt that the ambassador would be more sympathetic than I and got his approval before talking to me. That practice didn't last very long. Morell, who was a good man, became a good friend and we worked cooperatively.

Although we obviously didn't advertise our differences to people on the outside, government officials and political leaders - both the Kuomintang and Taiwanese opposition elements - were certainly aware of them.

The ambassador and I carried on in friendly disagreement for about two years. In 1974 he was replaced by Leonard Unger, following a gap during which I acted as charge'. Unger asked me to stay for the balance of my tour. This was after President Nixon's visit to PRC and the Shanghai Communique, a watershed development in East Asia that fundamentally changed the environment of our China policy.

The overwhelming event for me in Taiwan was this change in our China policy, a change that was sprung on us by stealth and carried out by Nixon and Kissinger with a degree of clumsiness toward Taiwan that contrasted with the exquisite care they devoted to the concerns of the PRC. Our first news in Taipei was an informal phone call from a desk officer in the State Department alerting us to an important announcement about to be made by the White House. A few minutes later we received a flash message with the text or essence of the president's statement about Kissinger's trip and his own plan to visit China before May of 1972. Coming from the conservative, anti-communist leader of the United States of America, this was indeed a big deal, and, along with most others, we had been left entirely out of the loop. If I as a person who supported the change in our policy viewed our behavior in this manner, you can imagine the effect on Walter McConaughy, a conservative gentleman of the old school thoroughly entwined in our moral crusade against communism.

The historic announcement was made in July 1971 about a week after my arrival in Taipei. Unaware of White House maneuvers, McConaughy had underestimated portents of change. I, although expecting the administration to crack the China door open, thought that it would approach the PRC cautiously and certainly give us notice. We were both jolted by the news. The ambassador was outraged. He felt he had been done in along with his friends in the Republic of China, allies of long standing. Apart from petty feelings of annoyance about being deliberately cut out of such an important process, I was mostly concerned by the speed and abruptness of the change, fearing it could easily result in unintended consequences. In essence, McConaughy was uncomfortable if not entirely opposed to recognition of the PRC; if the PRC was to be recognized, he would insist on maintaining diplomatic relations with Taiwan. I was sure Beijing would never accept such an arrangement. Yet I had much sympathy for the population of Taiwan and believed we could and should find a way to accommodate their basic needs.

Once we had overcome our astonishment and differing reactions to the news, the ambassador and I turned to practical concerns. We knew the Kuomintang authorities would be astounded that we had taken this action without any kind of notification or consultation with them. Chiang Kai-shek had probably been assuming the status quo would be everlasting; his son, Vice Premier Chiang Ching-kuo and the operational ruler of Taiwan, may have been mentally prepared for some change but surely would be shaken. Almost all people would be worried, and many, including nationalistic party members, would be furious. At a minimum, we would face the excruciating discomfort of trying to explain a policy about which we were uninformed. We expected the leadership would probably keep negative reactions under control, but we were not sure. I naturally remembered the sacking of the embassy fourteen years earlier during my first tour in Taipei, a nationalistic frenzy indulged by the authorities if not actually stimulated by them. It was not a morale-booster to be back in the same building, wondering how crowds might behave this time.

Not having been prepared for a change of policy, either by their own government or by us, ordinary citizens of Taiwan were obviously surprised and confused. Most of them probably found it hard to believe that the U.S. would recognize the PRC or withdraw recognition of Taiwan. They knew their island was the location of important U.S. bases and manufacturing operations for big American companies. No one welcomed the announcement, except a few members of the minority favoring Taiwan independence. The huge majority of Taiwanese, including most independence advocates, were more realistic. While happy to see the end of U.S. support for Chiang's claim to the mainland, they worried that Taiwan would be dangerously isolated. Quite uniformly, people of recent mainland extraction feared that the U.S. change would undermine their status and growing prosperity.

These popular views did not become immediately clear. In the first rash of reactions in the press controlled by the regime there was a tone of "down with the US, we have been betrayed," but there were also comments from some sober observers who analyzed the situation judiciously. The most worrisome noises came from deliberations within the Kuomintang party structure where, for a day or two, some quite senior people talked of violent actions against the US.

We worried about demonstrations. In fact, the government must have shared our concern, because shortly after the announcement they sizeably increased the police presence around the chancery, the ambassador's residence and my house. Lamp posts, walls, and other inviting places were plastered with anti-American slogans - rather like the protest style of the communists in Beijing. Although the situation was tense and worrisome, McConaughy and I felt the regime would not allow matters to get out of hand. We warned our staff to be careful, nevertheless. Fortunately, we were right. The leaders let their Kuomintang colleagues blow off steam and then quelled radical talk; they called us in to make strong remonstrances about our obligations as an ally, etc.; and then the tensions eased. No violence was tolerated for seven years - until the final outburst during Christopher's negotiations for our post-diplomatic relations in 1978.

The process by which we in the embassy - as well as the leaders and people of Taiwan - learned of what our government had in mind was shapeless and confusing, surprisingly clumsy for men who prided themselves on their acute understanding. Little advance thought had been given to the operational issues. Political bromides, such as Nixon's assertion that "our action in seeking a new relationship with the People's Republic of China will not be at the expense of old friends," were viewed with proper cynicism in Asia. Within a fairly short period of time people in Taiwan suspected they were an annoying fragment complicating the implementation of a grand American strategy devised in Washington.

At the beginning stage, I did not feel so critical of our "planning," and I never wavered from my basic support of Nixon's intent. After months of unsuccessful attempts to get meaningful infractions from Washington, however, I was really disturbed and quite angry. The ambassador was less inhibited by lack of instructions; he stuck his neck out in assuring Taiwan's leadership that we would not be withdrawing our support of them. Washington's instructions were minimal - primarily because the State Department and its East Asian Bureau knew little more than we did about what our leaders really had in mind about time tables and specific actions. In this atmosphere of basic ignorance, McConaughy chose to emphasize the happy side, presenting the issue as a long term one, unlikely to harm our ties to an old ally. Although I did my best to keep up people's courage, I suggested with increasing frequency that it was only a matter of time - within the foreseeable future - before we withdrew our military forces from Taiwan and extended diplomatic recognition to the PRC.

McConaughy's optimism was shaken in late 1971 when the U.S. effort to introduce a dual representation formula into the UN failed and resulted in Taiwan's expulsion from the organization, an event that stunned the people of Taiwan. That year, the State Department had finally gotten White House approval to propose an arrangement that would have given China's seat on the Security Council and General Assembly to the PRC but preserved a place for Taiwan in the Assembly. It was a scheme that I had promoted vigorously in earlier years. Kissinger had opposed it in 1970 as unworkable but had relented in the new atmosphere of 1971. Taiwan was bullied into submission. In retrospect, I am sure Kissinger was right about his original prediction of a negative, zero-sum reaction from the PRC. More to the point, he must have known the prospects for success were minimal after his spectacular visit to Beijing in July. This caused a huge shift in voting patterns among countries that had chafed so long under our old policy. The Chinese arranged a humiliating defeat for our position, and Taiwan was out of the UN. This was lesson number one for them about the implications of our new strategy.

Lesson number two was the Shanghai Communique issued on February 28, 1972 at the conclusion of President Nixon's visit to China. The key section read: The U.S. side declared: The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China. The United States does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes.

Along with others, we learned in advance from the New York Times something of the communique's content and the course of its evolution. We were not given a text until just before its issuance, and our efforts by telegram, helpful visitors, etc. to get some exegesis were unsuccessful. I was rather relieved by the communique, because it clearly identified the issue of peaceful resolution and suggested gradualism in the process of normalization. I took exception, however, to the blatant falsehood of its assertion about "all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait" agreeing there was "but one China." Our Kuomintang friends couldn't contradict this clever manipulation of their pretense about sovereignty over the mainland, but our Taiwanese friends - both moderates and extremists - were outraged. Personally, I saw no reason why the U.S. could not have adopted the Japanese or Canadian formula (i.e., "take note of" or "acknowledge" the Chinese position) that was less offensive. Marshall Green tried to get this language modified but didn't succeed. At the time, I thought the American authors were ignorant of conditions in Taiwan, and my later experience working with them convinced me that my deduction was correct.

My criticism did not detract from my basic support of the Shanghai Communiqué, and I did my best to use this one-and-only guide for the conduct of our extremely delicate operations in Taiwan. Ambassador McConaughy, burned by the July, 1971 announcement and the UN defeat, also took hope from a document that did not announce an explicit timetable for normalization. The phrasing of the communiqué was a work of art subject to different interpretations. I thought it meant that we would eventually terminate diplomatic relations with Taiwan; McConaughy didn't. Marshall Green, who was despatched along with John Holdridge from the NSC to tell us what it meant, refused to settle our argument but he noted the absence of any flat commitment to normalize. This encouraged McConaughy. He could not conceive that his country would de-recognize an old ally.

Among all groups in Taiwan the communiqué was a hot topic for discussion. We were subjected to lots of angry criticism, especially for the language I have highlighted. Native Taiwanese were extremely critical of the text. They questioned our right to set policy that would govern their lives. Some did not agree with our basic premise; i.e. that Chinese on Taiwan wished to have one nation. They were interested in independence, not one China, particularly one run by Beijing. Along with almost everybody else on Taiwan, the independence advocates worried about their future and the possibility of a cut-off of military supplies. Mainlanders feared the collapse of their universe. Despite vociferous criticism, I also detected a sense of relief in many quarters that the United States had not said something even more radical.

The third lesson for Taiwan was that the US military presence really was going to be withdrawn. This was the most operational effect of the new policy. Predominantly, our military base facilities and forces were in Taiwan to support our war effort in Vietnam. The most important facility was CCK Airbase near Taichung used for logistic purposes and refueling of aircraft such as B-52 bombers headed for Vietnam. Further south we had a Cold War strike base for F-4 aircraft along with a small complement of nuclear weapons. There were also other facilities scattered around the island for a variety of purposes, including rehabilitation of aircraft and tanks. Seventh Fleet ships made frequent use of the port facilities in Chilung and Kaohsiung, and the Commander of the US Taiwan Defense Command was a three star admiral. The arrangements struck me as serving a useful purpose so long as the Vietnam war was going on. I should mention that we also had a MAAG for military supplies and training purposes.

Almost immediately after the July 1971 announcement and very actively after the Shanghai Communique, we assumed in the embassy that we should prepare for the phase out of our forces and certainly discourage our military from any thoughts of expanding activities. I wasn't sure what would happen with the MAAG; I hoped we could reach some agreement that would leave a military assistance component on Taiwan. This was an uncomfortable prospect for McConaughy, but I don't recall much resistance from him. Our military commanders, however, were on a quite different wave length, particularly since Washington delayed so long in providing us with so much as a sketch of a withdrawal plan. CINCPAC had little appreciation of what was going on in Washington, and the Seventh Fleet and Taiwan Defense Commanders had even less. They didn't want to think about withdrawals; they even spoke of beefing up forces. The JCS in Washington, who were closer to senior policy makers, had more than an inkling of what might happen, but they were in no hurry to issue guidance until ordered by the president.

Feeling more strongly about this than the ambassador, I struggled to get Washington to rein in our local military and introduce some realism about our new policy. I failed, and we were left dangling in Taiwan. As a result we sometimes had senior military personnel from the Pacific commands, including CINCPAC himself, reassuring their Taiwan counterparts that all would be well.

To make matters worse, we asked a big favor of Taiwan. I am embarrassed not to remember whether it preceded or followed our first notification on force withdrawals, but the impact would have been equally confusing in policy terms. When we reached our first fragile agreement with North Vietnam in 1972, we suddenly realized we were short of aircraft to beef up the South Vietnamese Air Force in the window of time before we would have to cease our own operations. We needed about a hundred or so F-5A,B planes used by the South Vietnamese, and we turned to Taiwan for help. Taiwan had plenty of these aircraft that were being phased out in favor of new F-5Es to be co-produced with Northrop in Taiwan.

After getting instructions from highest authority in Washington, McConaughy, the Taiwan defense commander, and I promptly called on Vice Premier Chiang Ching-kuo and the chairman of the Taiwan JCS. Not surprisingly, they agreed and were able satisfy our needs quickly. In partial return for this, we guaranteed eventual U.S. Government approval of the F-5E co-production agreement, an action that might otherwise have been de-railed by the Shanghai Communique.

Chiang obviously saw the longer term benefit of doing us this favor, and we were pleased to have been able to accommodate Washington so rapidly. The net effect, however, was politically confusing - on the Taiwan leadership, on our military commanders, and on Ambassador McConaughy. To varying degrees, they were briefly lulled into hoping our force withdrawals from Taiwan would be postponed indefinitely. In fact, there was a modest build up of American forces in Taiwan for a few months to reinforce our resumed bombing efforts against North Vietnam. I remained sure, however, that we would have to give up our military structure on Taiwan.

In any event, it was not long before we had to tell Taiwan we were about to begin staged withdrawal from the island. The ambassador and I made the initial presentation of our plans to Chiang Ching-kuo who took the news glumly but without great resistance. Over the next year or so we continued the process and after Ambassador McConaughy left for Washington, first for consultations and then retirement, I carried on alone. Our meetings with Chiang were not to seek concurrence; we phrased our remarks in the most diplomatic terms possible, but we had no intention of allowing Taiwan to interfere with our plans. As the embassy's point man, I found this a very difficult task, far more delicate than most. Boiled down to its essence, our message was as follows: to fulfill President Nixon's commitment to your enemy in the Chinese civil war, we are removing our military presence from your country. We know you are a long standing ally of the United States, and we of course support the right of your people to peace and security.

Understandably Taiwan was very unhappy about what we were doing to them. In these circumstances I was most impressed by Chiang's conduct, less so by his stubborn subordinates. At one point, the Taiwan side deliberately leaked information in violation of an explicit understanding not to do so. Partly to signify I was a loyal US team member, I asked Washington to order me to see Chiang. I called on him alone and, speaking in reasonably good Chinese, braced him with our strong objection. Apart from this and a few other problems, Taiwan sensibly did not give us a hard time over the withdrawals - probably less than our own commanders. The process of notification was virtually complete by the time Ambassador Unger took over, although the final withdrawals, the F-4s, intelligence facilities, and headquarters structure, took place after I returned to Washington in 1974.

The most important issue for Taiwan, i.e., the ultimate significance of all that was happening to the country, was not at all clear to anybody during my service in Taipei. In what time frame would the U.S. normalize relations with the PRC? What would be the effect on Taiwan's status? Would a U.S. presence remain on the island? Would the defense commitment remain? Would Taiwan be able to procure arms? etc. For understandable reasons Washington could not provide clear answers to any of these questions, but it could have done much better in helping us cope with Taiwan's trauma. It did not do so, I believe, largely because the White House was playing its cards very close to its chest and did not trust the State Department, which was unable to make a case on our behalf. Thus instead of a consistent U.S. message, people in Taiwan were subjected to confusing voices from Americans with different opinions.

Looking back now, it is interesting that the closest thing to an answer about Taiwan's future status came not from the US but from Japan. When Japan raced ahead of us in 1972 to normalize relations with the PRC, they faced many of the same problems that would complicate our negotiations. Although Japan's arrangements for Taiwan were governed by their discussions with the PRC, they also had to be acceptable to the Taiwan authorities. This led to a drawn out negotiation in Taipei as well as Tokyo - with both help and interference from the governing Liberal Democratic Party. The Japanese ambassador in Taipei, who was a friend of many years, kept me well informed of this process, and I reported it in great detail to Washington.

At the time I got no reaction from Washington, although there was great interest in the Japanese experience. Effectively, Japan cut off all official relations with Taiwan, but preserved a wide range of unofficial relations by means of a facade which was tolerable, if not entirely "acceptable" to the PRC. Granting that the Japanese didn't have to cope with the security issue, their experience was nevertheless very pertinent to what we might eventually do. Japan, the PRC, and Taiwan were quite aware of this as they negotiated the details.

In the absence of guidance on how to deal with these long range issues, our job in Taipei amounted to damage control, and we went about it in different ways. The ambassador never abandoned hope that we would maintain full diplomatic relations with the Republic of China, and he was very sincere if somewhat misleading in his repeated expressions of continuity of policy. Convinced this was impossible, I plugged for maintaining as much of a relationship with Taiwan as could be salvaged. Even after losing its UN membership and diplomatic status, I thought Taiwan could survive as a national entity and prosper economically very much as it has. My main concern was that the process of change be orderly and systematic so as not to endanger Taiwan's political stability or security. In these early days I had some embryonic views on how we should maintain non-diplomatic relations and defense cooperation with Taiwan, but these did not crystalize until I returned to Washington.

Although McConaughy and I tried, when talking to the authorities and citizens of Taiwan, to maintain a common line of "reassurance" about U.S. constancy toward friends, our differing visions of the future were fairly apparent, and they were exposed when we had visitors. We had lots of visitors with a wide range of views: admirals who talked to us as though we would have perpetual military access to Taiwan; senators and congressmen who told us they had been assured by Nixon that the policy was just what had been publicly stated - no more, no less. Our visitors spoke in the same vein to Taiwan parsonages. The overall impact of visitor comments was to reduce the sense of alarm on Taiwan.

Of course, we had a few visitors who told us in confidence that they expected sharp departures from current policy, and over time they turned out to be three-quarters right. My sense was that the future might be somewhat between the extremes. In any event, I was desperate to know more about what was going on in Washington. With the ambassador's approval, I wrote and phoned Marshall Green, but I must say that my probing was not very successful. I then asked that I be allowed to return to Washington for consultations, and my request was approved, but not for quite a while, and the result was not very productive. Although Marshall was slowly getting some grasp of the Taiwan issue, he was still being kept at arms length by the White House. John Holdridge, my former boss, friend, and colleague in the NSC, was sympathetic but unable to cut me in. I returned to Taipei little better informed.

Although the watershed Shanghai Communique provided us a kind of blueprint, it was vague on key points and left most questions unanswered. What I hoped for was an authoritative, two-sided message from Washington. For Taiwan I wanted as much reassurance as Nixon could give about protecting Taiwan's basic needs. For ourselves, and especially our military representatives, I wanted forthright guidance about force withdrawals. I have already explained that we didn't get the latter until late in the game. On the former, however, President Nixon was responsive, perhaps overly so, before his visit to China. I had the impression he really wanted to maintain close relationships with Taiwan as long as he could - unlike Kissinger who shunned the place. He had some respect for Chiang Kai-shek, and he was willing to listen to the Walter McConaughys and Ronald Reagans of the world. In response to McConaughy's request, he selected Ronald Reagan, then Governor of California, as his personal representative to visit Taiwan in the fall of 1971 to assure Chiang Kai-shek and the people that the United States would behave responsibly.

Reagan carried out his mission with zeal. We wrote his speech, blending the kind of sentiments we knew he would want to express within the strictures of the newly emerging policy, and limiting promises as much as we could. It was much more the kind of speech I would have given, than the more positive and hopeful version that McConaughy would have provided. Reagan dutifully delivered the speech as we had written it, but in his answers to questions he spoke for himself, sounding much more like McConaughy than Gleysteen and wandering way out of line in talking about the future. The ambassador and Reagan hit it off very well. Chiang Kai-shek was reassured, Chiang Ching-kuo may have been slightly reassured, and the tame media loved it. Unfortunately, Reagan's answers were misleading; he was speaking for himself, not Nixon and Kissinger. Some elements of the bureaucracy, media, and commercial community understood this. They were more sophisticated and understood the situation better than their bosses. Anyway, we got more reassurance than I thought was wise!

The kind of easy reassurances offered by Reagan were undercut by the Shanghai Communique a few months later. By this time, I had become more pushy in expressing my own views, because I was convinced they were more in line with administration policy. I assumed the U.S. would recognize the PRC relatively soon, that Taiwan would survive and prosper, and that one way or another we would help ensure Taiwan's security. With the ambassador and American colleagues - civilian and military - I talked very frankly this way. After we had begun our military withdrawals, I also became more and more frank with Taiwan citizens - by this time with the full approval of a new ambassador. I tried to conduct these conversations on an off-the-record basis, and I had little trouble doing so, because the regime, with strong powers of censorship, didn't want my remarks to become public. In discussions with high officials I was circumspect, but if asked, I responded frankly. I had no occasion to talk about grand strategy with Chiang Ching-kuo; if I had I would have probably pulled my punches without offering false consolation about the future.

By the time Unger arrived, the situation in Washington had stabilized. Through informal channels and with the passage of time, we managed to get a better understanding of what was going on. We became more active; I stuck my neck out pretty far by end of my tour. I gave a number of background interviews to editors in which I warned them that a change in the U.S.-Taiwan relationship was bound to happen. I gave these interviews with Unger's blessing, and we reported what I was doing to Washington. This was a painful process for both sides. Although many persons did not want to hear my conclusions, I think I people in Taiwan considered me "an honest man," and I finally gained respect from the regime when my predictions turned out to be right on the money. People probably felt that McConaughy was "morally" right, but that Unger and I were more in step with the times.

The embassy's situation was unprecedented, at least in my experience. First and most extraordinary, we were not consulted by our own leaders about a major change of policy radically affecting our country assignment. Second, we were given virtually no guidance about what to say to our host regime. Third, there was a split in the embassy front office as to where policy was going - or should be going. Obviously, all of this had a impact on the staff who were left with many questions and few answers. Nevertheless, morale was good. As I have mentioned, most of the staff saw East Asia more or less as I did. I think most of them felt that our opening to the PRC was a very significant shift that was bound to occur sooner or later. All, including two ambassadors, felt that it was handled badly on the Taiwan end. There was no way major surgery could have been painless, but with more care we might have been able to soften the hurt for our friends in Taiwan.

Nixon and Kissinger chose to circumvent the normal channels when they moved almost overnight to change the direction of our foreign policy. I think they paid inadequate attention to the effect of the new policy on Taiwan and the nervousness that it created in Korea and other East Asian countries, particularly Japan. I know their justification for being unorthodox, and I would have a hard time arguing they should have relied more heavily on Secretary Rogers. But at least they could have used Marshall Green, who was the Department's stalwart in this process, and they could have assembled an inside team at the NSC with some Taiwan competence. Fortunately, the Department came back to life when Kissinger moved over to become the secretary of state.

In Taiwan we were exposed to decisions one at a time, which made it difficult for us conduct ourselves in ways that would cause the least possible damage in Taiwan. We were very upset by these tactics and continually tried to find out from Washington what might be coming next. For many reasons, this was not possible during the early stages of normalization. Certainly the State Department did not have the blue prints. I am not sure that Kissinger did either. In his talks with the PRC after the Nixon visit he discussed possible formulas for recognition as well as the timetable for force withdrawal from Taiwan, and we now know that Nixon pledged to complete the process after the election in 1976. Although Kissinger apparently assumed fairly rapid progress, the process was, in fact, quite drawn out. Nixon's and Kissinger's hopes that their new policy would induce the PRC to put heavy pressure on the Vietnamese were disappointed. Dealing with Taiwan's future security proved more complicated and more politically sensitive than anticipated. The failure in the UN came as somewhat of a surprise; until things fell apart, we thought we could hold the line in the UN for at least another year. Then came the final demands of the Vietnam War followed by Nixon's resignation. Whatever neat plans may have existed in leaders' minds, these events gave our Taiwan policy an ad hoc quality it didn't deserve.

Having been at the receiving end in Taipei, I developed a very active interest in trying to protect Taiwan as much as possible within the constraints of the new policy. Just as in my final months in Taipei, I insisted on calling a spade a spade in my dealings with Taiwan representatives after I returned to Washington to serve under Phil Habib. Moreover, I made a point of telling representatives of the PRC that they didn't understand what was going on in Taiwan, and I tried to explain to them what I saw as the important characteristics of the islands. I was filled with missionary zeal on this subject.

Enough about the effects of our new China policy. We didn't spend all of our time taking things apart in Taiwan. In fact, the negative impact of the Nixon switch coincided with the emergence of very positive trends within Taiwan, political as well as economic. Since I have already touched on this elsewhere I can be relatively brief.

When I returned in 1971 for my second tour in Taipei, Taiwan was undergoing great political change, not dramatically from a police state to a democracy as in later years, but nevertheless significant. Although Chiang Kai-shek was still alive, his almost exclusive focus on return to the mainland no longer governed events. Both he and his preoccupations had virtually disappeared. The new focus was on Taiwan's development. The economy was enjoying rapid growth thanks to well managed export industries and extensive connections with the US and Japan. The old socialist industrial sector was being privatized, and market forces were being allowed to play a major role. Standards of living were rising rapidly.

Most significant for the democratic pattern of today, Taiwan's new leadership under President Chiang's son, Chiang Ching-kuo, was co-opting growing numbers of the native Taiwanese community into the government, the Kuomintang, and the army - even slowly into the senior officer corps. Police state controls were being softened; political power was beginning to be shared; and Taiwan had become a very egalitarian, educated, and socially mobile society.

To be sure, there were more than a few ugly traces of the old regime. Mainlanders still dominated the government and politics. Although oppositionists were elected to the parliament and local governments, they were still barred from organizing any political party outside the Kuomintang. Human rights abuses against Taiwan independence activists and other dissidents were prevalent and often ugly. The mainlander-native divide that I saw during earlier years was still a dominant factor of public life, despite encouraging trends toward accommodation on both sides. The government's implacable hostility toward the PRC - and its periodic resort to para-military pinpricks against the communists - remained, even if younger Taiwan citizens sought to learn more about the mainland, some even wanting to travel there. Permission for cross-Strait business and travel was still ten years away.

Citing these traces of the past, some people, including Taiwanese opposition leaders, independence advocates, and some of our missionaries, argued that the regime was as ugly as ever. As in Park Chung Hee's Korea, they stirred up support from sympathizers in the U.S. and Japan in hopes of stimulating foreign intervention. Before I discuss this, I want to emphasize that these people were surprisingly blind to the longer term significance of major changes, particularly the leadership's gradual but real accommodation of the Taiwanese majority throughout the society, the de facto military truce with the PRC, and the evolution of a new value structure in urban areas as a result of market driven growth and foreign exposure.

Unlike the embassy under Rankin and Drumright, the embassy under McConaughy and Unger deserves credit for understanding and being in the forefront of reporting this evolution. Our political counselor, Burt Levin, a shrewd and colorful "China-type," had a firm grasp of it, including the way average people were accommodating to the new vision. So did his successor, Harvey Feldman. I joined Levin on some of his "take the pulse" trips, and I took advantage of my position to cultivate the senior individuals around Chiang Ching-kuo who were implementing this low key but major reform in Taiwan. I praised them and, whenever appropriate, Chiang Ching-kuo himself for what they were doing. Given his old time associations, McConaughy was less fascinated by this process than I, but he let us react positively and convey the message to Washington. From my INR days before going to Taipei I recall there was already some appreciation of this evolution in Taiwan, and after I returned to the EA Bureau in 1974, I think Embassy Taipei's view had become conventional wisdom in the Department.

President Chiang Kai-shek and his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, were the symbols straddling this profound change. As I have mentioned several times before, my opinion of the father was less than favorable. I know he played some positive role in China's modernization, but I saw him as a disappointing authoritarian leader; by this time he was a spent force, completely out of touch with the times. His public life was apparently controlled by his wife, who was always with him, or by his secretaries. I was uncomfortable when Americans fawned over him and probably gave him the wrong impression of his status in the U.S.. I accompanied the ambassador on a few calls, once to talk about the impending collapse of Taiwan's position in the UN. Usually, the reason for the visit was taken care of quickly and the rest of time it was "memory lane." McConaughy liked this, and the two men got along very well. Despite my lack of esteem, I did not have hostile feelings about Chiang Kai-shek.

I had a very different view of Chiang Ching-kuo. My opinion of him went through an evolution. I first considered him a junior version of his father. That changed when I got to know him; eventually I had a very positive view. In fact, historically speaking, I would list Chiang Ching-kuo as one of China's more impressive leaders - even compared to the mainland competition. During my second tour he was first deputy premier and then premier before becoming president after his father's death. These were promotions without a distinction; he did the same work in all these capacities. He was effectively in charge of the regime and the country for many years.

Chiang the younger was Taiwan oriented. He visited all parts of the islands to see for himself how people lived. He wanted native Taiwanese to support the regime. He was a smart, moderate man who tried his best to live down his own and his family's checkered past. Although he was very down to earth, Chiang Ching-kuo had a concept and vision about what was needed in Taiwan; i.e. a prosperous, well educated, egalitarian society embracing native born as well as immigrant citizens and depending on strong military forces and international engagement for protection. I often heard him talk this way, but I don't really know how his vision extended to China proper. In his youth he was sent by his father to be educated in the Soviet Union. He denied ever having been a communist, but clearly the experience left him more concerned than his father about the fate of common man. For a leader who had traveled so little to the West, he was quite well informed about the world.

For all the improvements over his father, Chiang Ching-kuo was also authoritarian, very tough, and solidly anti-communist. He maintained firm control over the military establishment and intelligence community - undoubtedly responsible for some of the activity we opposed. He could be quite brutal, as a number of people who crossed him found out. Nevertheless, I admired him for his intellectual growth and for what he did for Taiwan. I don't know if Taiwan could have survived without Chiang Ching-kuo or someone like him.

I had a good relationship with him, although it was not nearly as close as, for example, Ray Cline's, the CIA station chief during my first tour in Taiwan. Ray became known as the "American ambassador" regardless of who actually filled that chair. He was perceived - to some extent correctly - as running the show. None of his successors had the same entree or power even though they all lived in the "Pink House" reserved for station chiefs. Ambassador Drumright allowed Ray to do his "own thing." He traveled with Chiang Ching-kuo and became a kind of foreign confidant. In those days we were still using Taiwan as a base for many anti-communist operations. Cline's role was useful for this purpose, but he should never have been allowed to appropriate such an important role. In any event, my contacts with Chiang Ching-kuo were more innocent. Many of them were in the company of the ambassador. Occasionally, I would escort visitors to see Chiang. I dined with him many times, and I did see him privately on rare occasions.

I remember one such time when Speaker of the House McCormack came with a "small" delegation of 16-20 representatives plus wives. I was charge' at the time, and I invited the huge group to my house. I also invited Premier Chiang Ching-kuo, who got the time wrong and arrived a half hour early. Alerted by our security officer, I rushed home to greet him, and the two of us had a completely private conversation about many things including policy matters until the throng arrived. Chiang's willingness to come to my place, combined with our private conversation, didn't harm my standing in Taiwan officialdom. I must say this was a remarkable experience for me; I found that I could talk with him informally and comfortably about very delicate issues.

Despite Chiang Ching-kuo's relatively enlightened rule and the changes he was nurturing, Taiwan was still enough of a bad boy in the period 1971-74 to be singled out quite often for American punishment. With little public notice, we complained, sometimes very sharply, to the authorities about human rights violations, censorship, harassment of opposition forces, and so on. This was usually done by the political section although occasionally by the ambassador or me. Opposition elements, who knew we did this, appreciated it and often made a show of their relations with us in hopes it would provide a protective screen against the authorities.

During this period we also vigorously discouraged lingering tendencies in Taiwan to conduct para-military and intelligence adventures against the PRC, especially cloak and dagger operations mounted from Hong Kong, which I will touch on later. In the same vein we detected and began strenuous efforts to stop a clandestine nuclear weapons program. We came across intelligence and other evidence that the regime was diverting substantial resources into development of nuclear weapons. We had a difficult time verifying this, initially treating it as probable but not conclusive. Over past years we had cooperated extensively with Taiwan in peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We had helped with the construction of several nuclear power plants. Our Atomic Energy Commission had good rapport with Taiwan scientists, had provided assistance in improving Taiwan's scientific base, and was familiar with Taiwan's nuclear labs. So we first looked to the AEC for information about what the regime was really doing. They were not very useful.

A senior AEC representative came out to help us. For some time we had been trying to pry our way into the nuclear lab at the Chung Shan Institute where we were fairly certain Taiwan was reprocessing fuel to extract plutonium. Having been given a run around by the authorities, we finally succeeded in getting access. When the Washington visitor, the embassy's Science Attache, and I inspected Chung Shan we were told flatly that the labs there were not used for reprocessing and that Taiwan had never been engaged in the process. Our AEC man saw clear evidence, however, of lab design for that purpose, and we later discovered they had temporarily dismantled part of the facility to hide their operations. These observations at Chung Shan, combined with increasingly convincing intelligence, led us to make a strong demarche, demanding that all nuclear facilities in Taiwan for reprocessing or other military uses be closed down. That was done - more or less, for a while.

An ironic footnote. On a subsequent visit, this same AEC representative told me that he had been approached by his Taiwan counterparts to ask that we "loan" Taiwan a small amount of plutonium for peaceful research purposes in their labs. I was astounded that Taiwan could be so brazen, even more by our man who said he was inclined to oblige them. Washington quickly helped us snuff out this little ploy.

My view on leaving Taipei was that the nuclear genie had been put back in the bottle, or at least had not been allowed to get further out of the bottle. However, a few years after I returned to Washington, the issue again became acute; we found more incontrovertible evidence of Taiwan's experimentation with nuclear weapons production - somewhat akin to our problems with South Korea - and we had to make an extraordinarily strong demarche to stop it. This Taiwan experience sensitized me to the Korean scene. I was a strong supporter of the tough actions we took in both countries.

I would like to conclude with a few more comments about the embassy and the effects of the new China policy on its relations with other U.S. organizations in Taipei. The issue of our force withdrawals from Taiwan created tension between the embassy and the Taiwan defense command. The commanding admiral, a submariner, while being a basically good man, was not skilled in the diplomatic game and lacked sympathy for the direction in which we were moving. Since his guidance from Washington and from CINCPAC was sometimes at cross purposes with Nixon's new policy, we worked out stringent new rules of conduct for all of our military forces to minimize potential misunderstandings. In the early stages, the admiral wasn't very cooperative: we were trying to lower our military profile on Taiwan; he was trying to keep it high. Under McConaughy, who was cozy with admirals, it was hard to keep the commander down.

Under Unger it was easier both because of his views and the fact that he was under pressure from Washington to ensure firm control over all elements of the country team. Our policy had also become more clear. Shortly after Unger arrived I had a big fight with the admiral who wanted to talk to the ambassador rather than me to try and get around the rules. Since I was the designated contact for the U.S. military, I didn't let him, and we argued back and forth angrily for a long time. He accused the embassy of pandering to the PRC against the interests of our hosts in Taiwan; I warned him that if he kept on giving us a hard time, we would have no trouble getting Washington to order him to behave, or words to that effect. This sobered him down. Unger backed me fully. The admiral's behavior improved markedly.

The admiral was not always present at our high level meetings concerning the military draw-downs. He was, however, very much in the picture when we negotiated the transfer of Taiwanese F-5A and Bs to South Vietnam, and was most helpful. Of course, after each meeting that the admiral didn't attend, we would give him a complete read-out. There was no personal animosity between the embassy and the US command; they were very good to us. But most U.S. military officers understandably thought they were defending a close relationship with an ally and anything that smacked of a departure from this bothered them. It was a real shock for them when we changed directions.

I should say that in general I had very good relations with the U.S. military in Taiwan. I went out of my way to be helpful to them. But sometimes on specific issues, such as the one I just mentioned, I had to be, and was, quite tough. I also had a pretty good relationship with the senior officers of the Taiwan military, including the JCS. I saw a lot of them, mostly in social settings. They knew we had fairly ready access to their boss, Chiang Ching-Kuo; some of them sometimes attended our sessions with him. They always invited us to their parties; we periodically reciprocated.

The station chief during my DCM tour was Daren Flitcroft. The deputy was Bob Grealy. By this time, the station had only residual contacts with the kind of people who had been powerhouses in Cline's days. Because of our cooperation over many years, they knew the intelligence community well, including presumably some of the operatives working against the PRC. But our policy had changed since Cline's days - even before Nixon's opening to the PRC; the change probably started in the Kennedy administration. We stopped talk about their return to the mainland, and we tried to stop them from using violent tactics - poisoned pens, bomb throwing, etc. This new position may have gotten blurred sometimes because of longstanding close personal relationships between our people and the perpetrators of such activities.

McConaughy had a good formal relationship with the Station Chief, but he insisted that his DCM manage the relationship between the Station and the rest of the Embassy. That left me the main job of liaison with the Station, even though the Chief participated in country team meetings. I discussed this aspect of the job with the Ambassador soon after my arrival; I accepted the role willingly because I thought it was important that the front office know what the CIA was doing; I am not sure what my predecessors had done in this regard, but I thought it newly important since there had been a number of embarrassing incidents, particularly in South East Asia, caused by the failure of embassies to exercise firm supervision over stations. Although he obviously agreed that intelligence activities must conform with U.S. policy, McConaughy didn't want to play the supervisory role directly himself, but he pledged he would support me in case of differences with the station.

In fact, that commitment was not really necessary, since both the station chief and his deputy were exceptionally cooperative. As I said, the station had a lot of embarrassing entanglements from the past from which we wanted to distance ourselves. I soon became well versed in intelligence matters, although perhaps not as well as I became later in Korea. With Unger's arrival I remained involved in this process, but the ambassador resumed a more traditional, direct role in supervision of all agencies.

I think I was comfortable with the activities of other agencies-USIA, MAAG, etc. I kept a close eye on USIA; I had troubles with the MAAG chief who, although under a military chain of command, was also subject to the ambassador's guidance for most of his work. I think we had three MAAG chiefs during my tour. The first was a very difficult person, a gung ho army major general who was always on the borderline of inappropriate behavior. As I recall, we eased him out before his tour was scheduled to end. His replacement ran afoul of military discipline for financial irregularities. He also had to be removed. Finally, we got a MAAG chief who did a fine job. McConaughy really hated to fire anybody; he was particularly anxious to keep good relationships with all the senior staff and considered the MAAG general "one of his boys." My recommendation caused him some pain, but he approved, nevertheless.

Our economic assistance program had been terminated a few years earlier, so that was no longer a factor in the management of the embassy. DEA, as I recall, gave us some problems; it was very new and very aggressive. Its prime focus was the trans-shipment of drugs from Southeast Asia to the States, and Taiwan's airports were a central part of the air network. There was quite a bit of drug trafficking through our military bases; drugs would be brought in by soldiers or their wives. We tried to be as helpful as we could to the DEA staff, and we had some drug trafficking experts on our own staff. DEA frequently ignored the fact that Taiwan was foreign territory and that they were required to operate with Taiwan's approval. They would sometimes appear unannounced at a civilian airport and make an arrest. They exceeded their jurisdiction and created unnecessary and embarrassing work for us when we had to apologize, usually at my level.

Our local drug problem was centered in our military forces. We frequently had airmen who got into trouble with Taiwan's strict rules against drug possession, mostly for marijuana, but sometimes, more dangerous narcotics. Taiwan also hosted many families of both military and CIA personnel assigned to Vietnam. Quite a few of them were involved in drugs, and we had a substantial drug problem in the American schools.

The Taiwan defense commander was responsible for the military schools, and the embassy for the civilian school. We worked together closely. I got the nickname of "Mayor" for my supervision of the schools on behalf of the ambassador. On two occasions, the admiral and I called all the American families together and really laid down the law with the support of the ambassador, who also attended. It was a gathering of thousands. When serious violators came to our attention, we took quick, decisive action - we sent the family home. Those draconian measures helped reduce drug usage among Americans, including our own foreign service families, to manageable levels.

Embassy Taipei was fairly large - not as large as Embassy Seoul - but substantial. If all agencies, except the military commands were included, we had a lot of Americans and Chinese working for the U.S. government in Taiwan.

I mentioned at the beginning that McConaughy was very generous in his treatment of me. Had I been in McConaughy's place as ambassador, I don't believe I would have allowed my DCM such a free hand. The relationship is a tricky one. I don't believe a DCM should march in lockstep with his or her boss. A reasonable difference of views is acceptable, and probably a good thing. Some constructive tension in the front office can be helpful; it may on occasion encourage one or the other officer to challenge conventional wisdom, whereas an overly compliant DCM can inhibit healthy argument and even invite danger in some situations. A rebellious DCM is almost sure to be destructive. The difficult question is where to draw the line between useful and destructive.

I think the situation in Embassy Taipei fell somewhere between the two. On the one hand, it was quite apparent to the host country that there was a significant difference of opinion in the embassy's front office. Both McConaughy and I tried to be circumspect about our differences, but acute observers could have detected them. I was never aware of any opportunity or effort by Taiwan to exploit the situation; nor was Washington concerned about it. It might have been different if I, the DCM, had been off base in terms of policy rather than a distinguished ambassador.

In retrospect, I think it was useful that I - or someone with my views - was in Taiwan while our PRC policy was undergoing a major shift. With a DCM who fully agreed with McConaughy, our government would have had a very difficult time getting the ship to steer in the right direction. There might have been serious consequences for Taiwan because the embassy might have delivered the wrong message at critical times. This entire problem melted away under Ambassador Unger. I think he and I had a rather ideal relationship. We had very different backgrounds and some differences, but they posed hardly any problem for our cooperation.

I should not leave this issue without also saying that I really liked McConaughy. After his retirement, I used to visit him. My articulation of my views was always known to him. I didn't go behind his back. It is the ambassador's role to set the views of an embassy, not the DCM's. It is best if the ambassador and a DCM broadly agree on the nature of our national interests in the host country as well as on the basic objectives to be pursued. Although McConaughy and I differed on the merits of recognizing the PRC, he gave me full credit for trying to keep our relations with Taiwan as close as we could. I think my views represented the majority of the embassy staff, even if I was more outspoken.

I want to add a footnote about something that severely embarrassed me while I was in Taiwan. Provoked by the war in Vietnam, some rogue official in our government provided hundreds of classified telegrams to a journalist, Walter Winchells' successor, I believe, who began to print them one by one in his columns. Some of them happened to be from Embassy Taipei, and apart from the shocking degree of irresponsibility involved by both men, I don't think great harm was done. However, one telegram was a message I had sent Marshall Green asking for his help in getting special permission for Taiwan's Foreign Minister Chou Shu-kai to visit Washington at a time we were trying to lower Taiwan's profile in our country. To support Chou's cause I had adopted a rather patronizing tone about his being one of the good guys in Taiwan, and I had been successful in getting him the visa. When the whole damn message was printed in the Washington Post, however, I was shocked and acutely embarrassed. Washington was never able or willing to explain how this had occurred, and I was forced to go and apologize in person about our inability to secrets.

Q: In 1974, you were appointed as deputy assistant secretary in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP). Who was the assistant secretary and how was the appointment made?

GLEYSTEN: The assistant secretary was Phil Habib, and he wrote to me asking whether I would be interested in the job. It came as a surprise, but I jumped at the chance. Despite being the most junior deputy to Habib, I inherited Art Hummel's China responsibilities and retained them throughout my Washington tour. My other duties varied from time to time, depending on the strengths and seniority of other incoming deputy assistant secretaries. For example, when Owen Zurhellen joined us for about a year as the senior deputy, he was given the Japan and Korea portfolios. When he left, they were re-assigned to me. At various times, I also had responsibility for the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Southeast Asia (but not Indochina) and the Pacific island areas. For a period I also supervised the Office for Regional Affairs. Throughout this period Bob Miller had normal responsibility for Southeast Asia - overwhelmingly the problems of Vietnam that were so vexing for Habib in those years. Economic issues were the province of our colleague, Les Edmonds.

I first met Habib in the early 1960s while I was in Tokyo and he was political counselor in Seoul. I kept up with him after he was assigned to Vietnam. We had a friendly relationship and enjoyed arguing with each other. While I respected him as a highly competent, extremely effective bureaucrat, I often disagreed with the strategy and tactics he was defending in Vietnam. I remember visiting him in Saigon in the 1960s; he was considerably overweight, consuming heavy amounts of wine. Yet he kept a pace that few could match. He was all over the place and on the go every minute of the day. He was quite brilliant in his performance. One had to wonder, however, how long he could carry such a workload, and in fact, it helped precipitate his first serious medical problem. Later, I admired Habib for biting the bullet on negotiations with North Vietnam, something he had so strongly opposed in earlier days. He played a powerful role in Clark Clifford's study for President Johnson, and then threw himself heart and soul into the Paris peace negotiations. He was ruthlessly honest in the process and willing to speak the unspeakable. When I joined his staff in Washington several years later, Vietnam was a most depressing issue. We were already on the final downward slide.

Vietnam did not prevent Phil from working on other issues. He was thoroughly engaged in China policy, which was so dear to Kissinger's heart. Although he looked to others for expertise, Phil had strong opinions about how to manage discussion in the American camp. I could always see him about China, Japan or any other problems that were arising in my area. He shared my sense of Japan's importance and paid steady attention to Korea. All his deputies, including junior me, were given more than the minimum time we needed with him.

Working for Habib, I learned what the term "political animal" meant. He operated within the bureaucracy as a politician would among his or her constituents. He felt it necessary - and liked - to make contacts with political leaders - quite like my subsequent boss Holbrooke who has similar instincts. I felt that these connections were sometimes overdone, but I admired Habib for his skills in the political arena. I tried my best to learn the game, even though sometimes I had to force myself to do it. Sensing trouble in Congress, Phil would instinctively seek to blunt any possible confrontation. He was known to be sincere, argumentative, and persistent - such a vigorous talker that it was hard for anybody else to get a word in. I couldn't mount such an attack, but I did learn that one has to be aggressive in dealing with Congress - i.e. pushing hard to see people, forcing them to listen to administration views, muting one's own reservations about administration policy, etc. There was no substitute for this Congressional combat so often poorly performed by members of the foreign service.

Let me turn to China. Like others I was fascinated by our new China connection, even more so perhaps because of my boyhood and foreign service experience. I wanted to act in Kissinger's China play, and I wanted to make use of my considerable expertise on the PRC and Taiwan. Getting into the play was easy, because my predecessor, Art Hummel, had earned Kissinger's respect, and Habib helped get me into the act as his apprentice. Contributing my expertise was more of a struggle, but fairly successful over time. In one of my first sessions in Kissinger's presence, Habib said he thought I had important things to say about Deng Xiaoping, and I was invited to explain why I thought Deng was not only a worthy successor to Zhou Enlai but probably considerably more important. Kissinger was skeptical; I stuck to my view, and after a year or so he more or less acknowledged I might be right. But whether the process of education was written or oral, it was always frustrating. Kissinger and his inner squad had been in the new China play from the beginning. They had a kind of conceit, and they were not eager to hear from others. Certainly, they did not want help in writing the play. Thanks to Habib's steady cover for me, I sensed that I was eventually accepted by Kissinger as a useful member of the bureaucracy to work with his inner circle. However, I was never part of that circle.

Despite my reservations about the way we had handled Taiwan, I felt our new relationship with the PRC was a radical improvement over the past policy of all-out confrontation. The change was demonstrably helpful to us in the conduct of our foreign policy, both internationally and to some extent domestically. Nevertheless, by the time I began working for Habib, we had reached a point of stalemate in our efforts to complete the process of full normalization of relations with China. The obstacle was Taiwan. In discussions with the Chinese we had not yet come to grips with this nitty gritty problem, largely because of substantial forces of domestic resistance reflected in Congress. This was the situation when I started in 1974 and it remained without substantial change until after the 1976 elections. Even so, great amounts of time and effort were devoted to China. We tried hard to find ways of signifying progress that would benefit our dealings with the rest of the world, especially the Soviets, and sustain the domestic credit earned by Nixon's daring move. High level visits to China were continued with much public fanfare, and large numbers of other Americans began treks to the land of cultural revolution. Internally, we spent much time and imagination preparing for and conducting this activity. It didn't lead to a breakthrough but it laid the ground work for the next administration.

Although Kissinger rarely shared his inner thoughts with persons such as me, I was quite involved in most aspects of our dealings with the PRC. Habib used me as his additional eyes and ears. He wanted me to keep him abreast of what was going on, and he passed on what he learned from on high. When crunch time would come, he got more directly involved, often saturating himself in the problem. I think it was a good technique. He normally took me along for discussions he had with Kissinger on China, even those that were quite small. Similarly, he made sure I went along on all the trips that Kissinger took to China. I was one of the "China experts" who might be required.

The most important issue consuming us during this period was how to sustain momentum toward normalization. Although I had been quite unhappy in Taiwan about what seemed like careless planning in Washington, I committed myself fully to the cause of normalization after I got back to our capital city. I really thought it could be accomplished without undermining the security of Taiwan, and if it couldn't, I was convinced the effort would still benefit us. I never doubted Kissinger wanted to complete the process of normalization. He had a transparent commitment to the PRC to finish the process, as did President Nixon who had been forced to leave the political scene. Ford, however, did not have the same emotional allegiance to our PRC policy. In contrast to Nixon's almost brazen reordering of the national agenda, Ford was more orthodox, worrying about the potential domestic repercussions of normalization just before going to the voters in 1976. In any event, I, along with others, annoyed Kissinger by pressing him (usually via Habib but sometimes directly) to push all the way to normalization. He didn't appreciate having puppies yap at his heels and told us to keep in mind the complexity of decisions faced by the president. Coping with Taiwan was another of my main responsibilities. In our dealings with the PRC during this two year period we fenced around the Taiwan issue - a fair amount of talking but no major effort to break the stalemate. As he had with Zhou and Mao in 1972 and 1973, Secretary Kissinger raised the issue with Deng Xiaoping during his trips to Beijing in both 1974 and 1975, emphasizing it was a problem within our body politic that had to be resolved. He described the concerns of Taiwan's defenders in Washington and stressed our government's need to take account of their opinion if we were to have the degree of consensus necessary for a successful normalization of relations with the PRC. Although I may be doing him an injustice, I never felt that Kissinger manifested much personal conviction that Taiwan's survival was in our national interest. He talked dispassionately from a Washington vantage point about the political strength of those who identified themselves with Taiwan.

In the first session I attended in 1974 Kissinger probed for Deng's reactions to a variation on the Japan formula; i.e., we would recognize the PRC as the sole government of China and withdraw completely from Taiwan in a military sense, but to ensure domestic support we would need to have a liaison mission in Taiwan and we would also want some assurance about Taiwan's security pending peaceful unification. The implied or stated premises were that all treaty relations with Taiwan would be terminated, people to people relations would continue, while Taiwan would be able to purchase defensive arms until the unification issue was peacefully resolved within the extended period mentioned by Mao Zedong. Kissinger always appealed for Chinese statesmanship and patience in dealing with this problem of history. No comprehensive model of a proposed solution was ever tabled, which was probably wise in the absence of presidential resolve to reach a solution.

In response, Deng pointed out that the principle of China's sovereignty, enshrined in the Shanghai Communiqué, could not be compromised by any continuing official or unofficial U.S. government relationship with Taiwan. Like Mao and Zhou in earlier meetings he specifically rejected any U.S. continuing role in the defense of Taiwan, even commercial provision of arms. He always added that we "owed China a debt," presumably for our failure to deliver on Nixon's pledge to normalize relations and to compensate China for enhanced risks in its confrontation of the Soviet Union.

While we remained deadlocked with the PRC about the next step of normalization, we proceeded to prepare for it rather systematically within the government. Force withdrawals from bases in Taiwan proceeded on the phased schedule that had been established while I was still in Taiwan. I supervised a careful study, lasting into the Carter Administration, on what Taiwan would need to maintain a "credible" defense effort. We not only surveyed Taiwan's requirements but also identified weapons and equipment that we should and should not supply. With little guidance but clear approval from my superiors, I worked hard to strip away all unessential functions from our civilian and military establishments in Taiwan. Very importantly, I kept the Taiwan authorities informed of our adjusting policy and cautioned them that I was virtually certain we would be switching recognition within the foreseeable future. My main interlocutor was the ROC ambassador, James Shen. I became the senior liaison for the Taiwan Embassy; by this time Kissinger refused all contact with Taiwan officials, and none of my other seniors, including Habib, wanted to hold Taiwan's hand.

Mostly through lunch meetings, I told Shen that official activity would become more and more difficult for Taiwan. I tried to paint as realistic a picture as I could, always asking him to convey my views to Taipei. Once - in 1976, he managed to break through our fence and called on Deputy Secretary Ingersoll for the undeclared purpose of requesting agreement for his successor. Taiwan knew that the future of its embassy in Washington was in doubt. Shen was said to be ailing, and they wanted to put a new ambassador in place before it might be too late. We had no forewarning of this move and were caught by surprise. Ingersoll was non-plussed by the request and looked to me for signals. After flash thinking, I blurted out something along the line: "Mr. Ambassador, you can't do that. We can't agree with your request. You will have to plan on staying here for a while." Ingersoll, following my lead, went on to emphasize the need for realism by Taiwan.

Our answer was very painful for Shen and somewhat insulting to his government, but a shift of Taiwan ambassadors at that point would have caused a real rumpus with the PRC. I was certain Kissinger wouldn't accept a new ambassador from Taiwan, so leaving Shen in place was the best tactic. In this zero-sum game, my attentiveness to PRC sensitivities didn't help my relations with the ROC. After the Ingersoll meeting, I talked to Shen and others, apologizing for a response that I knew was painful for them. In fact, however, Taiwan was a bit too clever. They should have tested the water before trying such a bold ploy, conceivably designed by one of their American lobbyists. In any event, Taiwan left Shen in Washington until the bitter end.

I want to touch on a few other aspects of our China activities. A very important feature of our high level contacts with Chinese leaders was to use the warmth of this relationship as a lever in our dealings with the USSR. We engaged the PRC in a broad range of well advertised discussions. We met frequently at Kissinger's level and once at the summit. There were other high profile sessions with the Chinese, for example, at the UN where I believe Kissinger first met Deng. These sessions were long, comprehensive, and remarkably candid in appearance. I sat through hours and hours of conversation, fortunately, not as the note taker. I had an advantage since I was one of two of us who spoke Chinese.

Although I thought the implicit consequences of our China connection were a useful factor vis a vis the Russians, I felt the overt manipulation of the triangle was overdone. I didn't like the cloyingly friendly, almost worshipful quality of some of our behavior toward the Chinese leaders, especially Mao, Zhou, and to some extent Deng. I could forgive some of this as an understandable pleasure to discover that Chinese Communists weren't so bad after all, and I could indulge a bit of it to keep the Soviets on edge. But I often reacted badly to the display. I thought it denigrated America's importance, and it ground against my conviction that the Chinese needed us as much as we needed them. It really pained me to hear Kissinger describing our policy of containment/detente with the USSR as a combination necessary to satisfy the softies in our own society and among our NATO allies. I did not like his habit of letting the Chinese keep the high ground of inviolable principles or not being rebutted when they spoke of our owing them a debt. I would have liked to hear a more robust defense of our policy, calling a spade a spade and noting our differences and common interests with both China and Russia. It would have worked just as well if not better, and we Americans would have felt better. Although I made these points to Habib and people in Kissinger's inner circle, I never had the opportunity or guts to tell him myself.

Another area where I sometimes parted company with Kissinger was military cooperation with the PRC. On the basis of long experience, I felt instinctively that as competitors for hegemony in Asia we were destined to have serious differences with China, even while trying to maintain the best relationship possible. I didn't oppose some military and intelligence activities with the PRC, but I was generally wary of measures that would militarily strengthen China. I was thinking of the effect on our East Asian allies, on a newly isolated Taiwan, and ultimately on our own armed forces. This applied not only to weapons but also to dual use technology such as advanced computers. The first time I really choked over this issue was on learning that Kissinger had given the British a green light to sell Spey engines (British built engines used in the F-4) to the Chinese to jazz up one of their fighter/bombers. I argued that this wouldn't sit well with the Koreans, Japanese, and certainly not with the Taiwanese. And it didn't. When the Japanese found out they were furious, particularly military officers. Computers were also controversial. In one long debated case I was the only semi-senior official to have objected, but I did object, and in writing. Subsequent history does not make me look bad. However, my problems under Kissinger were puny in comparison to the ill-considered moves we later made under Brzezinski's influence. A few additional comments about Kissinger's China travels. During my first visit with Kissinger back to the land of my birth in the fall of 1974, Deng was very much in charge. The meetings with him were quite fascinating to me if only because they were my first exposure to the process I have just described. Then in 1975 there were two important visits, one a preparatory trip by Kissinger in the early fall and the other by President Ford toward the end of the year. At the time the PRC was undergoing leadership struggles; Mao Zedong was in the final stages of his life as was Zhou En-lai. Deng had already moved to take a leadership role but unbeknownst to us had run into difficulties with Mao and leftist rivals, requiring him to take more cautious positions. The problem was reflected in the foreign ministry which was in a state of flux and less helpful than in the past. And perhaps it played some part in a sophomoric Chinese effort to tweak Kissinger into a more cooperative stance.

Almost coinciding with our delegation's arrival in Beijing we read foreign press stories, date-lined Beijing, stating that Chinese officials were unhappy with Kissinger's failure to complete the normalization process and that they were going to invite Defense Secretary Schlesinger to visit China to move things along. Kissinger, who saw himself as having earned a very special, if not unique, place in U.S. dealings with China, was furious over this ploy and set about showing the Chinese who was running China policy in the U.S. government. And he did this quite well. Even if he didn't like the treatment of Kissinger, Deng must have known about this petty gamesmanship.

During this preparatory trip, we were trying to get the PRC to agree on a communique announcing Ford's visit, and we wanted to insert some creative language along the lines of the Shanghai communique to fortify it with a sense of incremental progress. Our PRC counterparts understood what we were trying to do, and they didn't want to help us build a half way house to normalization. They wanted a timetable and public commitment. In wording that I slaved over with Dick Solomon of the NSC and Oscar Armstrong, one of our key China officers, we concocted a statement declaring that normalization was our common goal, vaguely implying progress, but lacking any specifics about substance or timing. The PRC didn't like it and was determined to squeeze more out of us. The Chinese in effect told us no communique and no Ford visit were preferable to ratifying our procrastination.

After our sessions with Deng, we had provided the PRC with a draft communique early in the evening, and we hoped they would accept it so we could wrap it up by the next morning. Instead, the Chinese sent us a counter version about midnight. I no longer remember its contents, but it was quite unacceptable. Kissinger called a small group of us to his room, including Habib, Lord, and myself. I remember the infernal quacking machine that was supposed to muffle words enough so they could not be picked up by monitoring devices. This was one of the few times when I felt Kissinger was listening to me carefully. He asked me a series of questions about what I thought the Chinese were up to. He absorbed my answers and seemed to weigh seriously all the points I was making. He even accepted the thrust of my recommendations. For me, this degree of attention was a singular event. I said I thought that the main issue was a political judgment about the importance of the president's visit. Was it critically important, or were we willing to risk its cancellation? Assuming the latter, I explained that cancellation might be even more of a problem for the PRC than for us, and I therefore advocated a hard line, responding to the PRC in the tough manner that they had used with us. I suspected they would eventually become more reasonable. There was a consensus among us to do this so we sent a firm message back and after some dickering the PRC agreed on a compromise statement of some sort.

I was pleased by the outcome. I might add that, personally, I thought cancellation of Ford's visit would have been most unfortunate. Normally I am not a high stakes gambler.

To spite the Chinese for their behavior over the Kissinger communique, we slightly "downgraded" the Ford visit to China by combining it with a stop in Indonesia, theoretically making the Chinese share the limelight with Southeast Asia. Ford's summit sessions with Deng and Mao were not a great turning point in Sino-US relations. They were harmonious but didn't really resolve any of the major outstanding issues. I remember when discussion at the last session with Deng concluded before its allotted time and Deng was about to let people enjoy a few free minutes, Ford embarrassedly urged him to keep talking so as not to provoke media interest.

It was also during the same contentious preparatory visit in the early fall of 1975 that I had my one and only glimpse of Mao Zedong. Perhaps Kissinger included me as a reward, more likely because Habib told him to do so. I remember the Chinese kept us in the dark as to whether any of us would see Mao and when. Even after there was an agreed list and general time, they had us sight-see the Forbidden City, waiting for word from on high. The session, which took place in Mao's study, was substantively questionable, but the symbolism was important to Kissinger, and I was delighted to have a chance to gawk at a man who in his younger days was certainly one of the main figures of the 20th Century.

As we filed in, Mao greeted Secretary and Mrs. Kissinger effusively, grunting a few words in his Hunanese dialect that were translated first by his niece into mandarin and then by Nancy Tang into English. Despite my language ability, I couldn't follow the dialogue, but it seemed rather contrived. One grunt became many coherent English sentences, etc. Not necessarily phony, but surely padded out by Mao's female assistants. By far the most interesting phenomenon was the interplay between Mao and Deng. All other Chinese were reverential and obsequious toward Mao. Not Deng, who, while showing no disrespect, treated Mao as a peer. I couldn't read much into Mao's reaction except that I sensed a distinct lack of fondness. As a "China watcher" I found this intriguing. (After about fifteen minutes of this, most of us were escorted out leaving Kissinger, Ambassador Bush, and Winston Lord to carry on with Mao.)

The Chinese were very effective in their efforts to fence us off from observing their domestic strife. Although we came across occasional nuggets, such as I have just described, we needed far more information to dope out who was doing what to whom with what consequences for our dealings with China. We had virtually no worthwhile intelligence reports and, like the Chinese people, we were forced to rely on clues from the media, such as the anti-Confucius campaign conducted against Zhou and Deng by the leftists, and occasional bits of luck, a process I described at some length in recounting my Hong Kong tour. We speculated about what was going on, and we had some feel for the emerging post-Mao era, but we had little evidence of the rugged struggles going on.

Not long after this glimpse of Mao and Deng, I was back in Beijing for the Ford visit, and instead of going on with the delegation to Jakarta I stayed a few extra days during which I bought a Chinese Communist periodical to read on the plane to Tokyo. I was struck by a prominent article that had the flavor of pieces written just before and during the height of the Cultural Revolution. The article mentioned Deng in unflattering terms completely out of keeping with previous commentaries. I alerted my colleagues in Washington, but we didn't recognize that we had stumbled across pretty clear evidence that Deng was being ousted from his leadership role.

I forgot to mention another of these nuggets of intelligence about what was happening within the Chinese leadership in Mao's declining days. In the spring of 1975 I accompanied the Speaker of the House, Carl Albert, and the Minority Leader, John Rhodes, with their wives on an official visit to China. Although I was experienced with Congressional travel, this visit was exceptionally difficult, because of the Speaker's great fondness for drink as well as a self-centered, provincial American style that he maintained regardless of the occasion. His Chinese hosts let me know that they were offended by his interruption and his monopolizing conversations, mostly to offer anecdotes about minutiae or describe the wonders of the U.S. Constitution. Despite the Minority Leader's noble help, I was not able to prevent Albert's starting off in the same manner with Deng Xiaoping who flushed with anger and seemed about to break off the session. Fortunately, Deng calmed down and then delivered a long exposition on China's need for decades of peace so it could attract foreign investment and develop itself economically through a mixed socialist/market system.

Deng's statement was a much longer and more systematic presentation than we had heard from him in 1974, and it was delivered with a tone of real conviction, probably reflecting the challenges he was encountering from the "Gang of Four." The Speaker, who managed to interrupt Deng two or three times, displayed no interest when I later told him the importance of Deng's message. In fact, none of us appreciated its full significance until Deng was temporarily overwhelmed by the leftist radicals about six months later.

I should clarify my comments about the state of Sino-U.S. relations in the mid-1970s. When I spoke of lack of progress or stalemate, I was referring to the normalization process and our inability to move it forward. We, for domestic political reasons, were reluctant to take the leap, while the PRC was eager to conclude the process. In a broader context, however, our relationship with the PRC was greatly improved; in fact, it was quite solid in some respects, particularly in relation to our mutual concern over the Soviet Union. We were becoming more and more engaged with the PRC. The new relationship allowed us to bring intelligence experts to Beijing to share aerial photography of Soviet deployments. We were talking about using PRC territory to add to our intelligence collection capability. There were times when I thought that we treated the PRC better than Japanese or Korean allies. That bothered me, and I expressed my view to Kissinger, to his displeasure.

There were, of course, problems. For one, there were personality conflicts. As I indicated earlier, the PRC had become somewhat annoyed with Kissinger and his style, and this sometimes affected the atmosphere of meetings. The core problem was Taiwan. The PRC was not buying any of Kissinger's formulations. They repeatedly reaffirmed the language of the Shanghai communique - as far as they were concerned, there was only one interpretation, their interpretation. For us, Taiwan's future security was the most troublesome element. In 1974-76 the PRC showed no flexibility on this issue; it was going to be their way - i.e. no American military relationship after normalization - or nothing at all.

Of course there were problems in addition to Taiwan. Kissinger would have liked a more assertive and confrontational PRC policy toward the Soviet Union. He often made elliptical references to this objective but was never very specific about it. He also tried to involve the PRC in Korea and Vietnam without much success, which was the experience of his predecessors and successors. In fact, the PRC did not help us much, if at all, on Korean matters in those days, and it greatly disappointed Kissinger on Vietnam, playing its own cards in the peace process and substantially aiding North Vietnam's war effort - despite the latter's heavy tilt toward the Soviets.

In turn, the Chinese, who were quite shy of real danger and firmly determined to avoid the risk of serious military conflict with the Soviets, nevertheless wanted the highest possible tension between the Soviets and ourselves short of war. They kept telling Kissinger the Soviets' main target was Europe and ourselves, asking Kissinger why we followed a policy of detente, why we were so interested in arms control agreements when we could have far outmatched the Soviets in military spending, and so on. In the final analysis, neither the PRC nor we managed to alter each other's basic behavior.

I saw Kissinger in action not only on China, but also on Japan and Korea and sometimes Southeast Asia. Clearly, China was the topic of greatest interest to him; I would say that 80 percent of our meetings were on that subject. I mentioned earlier that there were times when I could not get through to the Secretary. For example, it was becoming clear that the Japanese mood was changing from post-war depression to a more normal national pride. This was a most important development for East Asia. While this was going on - and Kissinger was not only aware of it but quite talkative with the Chinese about it - he was fawning over the PRC, talking about the wonders of China's leaders and the greatness of Chinese civilization. Although the Japanese had also made a large mark for themselves and happened to be our allies, they sensed Kissinger was rather dismissive of them. From my own observation, I would agree that neither he nor his staff showed enough responsiveness to Japanese concerns. When the Japanese made reasonable requests for attention, they tended to get short changed in relation to China or West Europeans. Effectively, they were treated as second class citizens, carelessly ridiculed in discussions with the Chinese. If the Japanese ambassador wished to have an appointment with a high level official to discuss a soybean emergency, he would be deflected down to see Habib, whereas we thought nothing of asking the U.S. ambassador in Tokyo to see the foreign minister, or better yet the prime minister, about far less consequential matters. This was upsetting to the Japanese and embarrassing to us. Japan just didn't rank very high on Kissinger's agenda. I thought that Japan was far too important to be treated so cavalierly.

When the PRC normalized relations with Japan in 1972, the two countries side stepped the issue of a treaty of peace, Japan having signed the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty with us and 48 other countries, including the Republic of China under Chiang Kai-shek. In the mid 70s, the Chinese successfully pressed Japan to negotiate a treaty of peace and friendship, something that was completely unnecessary from the viewpoint of international law but a favorite gimmick of both the communist hegemonies. The Chinese proved very hard-nosed about the language they wanted to include, particularly a gratuitous reference opposing hegemony that was clearly aimed at the USSR. This was at a time when the Japanese were trying to improve their relations with the Soviet Union, so they resisted the Chinese demand in what was a bilateral squabble over a petty matter. Kissinger sided with the Chinese, although not as brazenly as Brzezinski. To jump ahead for a minute, Brzezinski in 1978 took it upon himself to tell Prime Minister Fukuda that the U.S. did not object to the clause and favored conclusion of the treaty. The Japanese felt cornered and humbled by Brzezinski's simplistic anti-Soviet gamesmanship. In my opinion, it was a needless insult to an ally; the PRC didn't deserve our support for its hypocritical rhetoric denouncing hegemony.

To put it bluntly, I felt our allies in Asia deserved higher priority than they usually got from Kissinger. I feared that treating Japan this way would ultimately provoke a nationalistic reaction, which wouldn't be in our interest - or China's. Although I was outspoken about this, Kissinger and his inner circle seemed indifferent

I have no reason to question that intellectually Kissinger appreciated Japan's importance to us, and I understood his preoccupation with China in relation to the Soviet threat. Even so, I am convinced he could have - and should have - handled the Japanese more skillfully. Apart from time pressures, etc, I suspect he was influenced by Chinese skill in managing (and manipulating) foreigners in contrast to Japanese awkwardness in complex discussion with foreigners.

I remember one important exception to this general tendency; i.e. the Tanaka scandal involving bribery of Prime Minister Tanaka by Lockheed, the American aircraft manufacturer. Kissinger paid close attention to what was happening during the resulting crisis and closed ranks with his fellow conservatives in the LDP. My own reaction, uncharacteristic, since I was usually the voice in the Department defending the Japanese, was that our relations with Japan and Japanese society as a whole might be improved if the Japanese went through a real cleansing, even if that meant that the LDP lost the next election. I favored taking a tough line with the Japanese, but I was overruled by Kissinger who tended to dismiss me as a novice regarding Japan. In this case, Kissinger showed his Metternich tendencies. He did not want to upset the stability of the Japanese political system; he wanted to help the Japanese conservatives - all honorable objectives, and he displayed the proper kind of concern by a secretary of state - even though I disagreed with him. The crunch issue that we wrestled with was the degree of pressure we should apply to the Japanese to get them to reveal the full nature of the scandal. There were prosecutors in both countries who were anxious to nail the perpetrators. Eventually, we went along with the Japanese in a drawn out investigation that nevertheless destroyed the powerful Mr. Tanaka. Not surprisingly, the LDP survived.

In the soybean crisis I mentioned earlier, the Japanese wanted assurances that the supply line would continue. Soybeans were a major US export to Japan. Yet when we had a severe shortage, we embargoed all exports without much consideration being given to Japan and our other steady customers, who were of course furious about our decision. I believe some exceptions were made but no prompt action was taken to help the Japanese. The ultimate effect was a Japanese decision to take control of some of the US business in this country as well as to diversify their procurement to other countries, including China. In this instance and in the second oil crisis in 1974 Kissinger may have sympathized with the Japanese, but he didn't spend any chips on them.

The Japanese ambassador, who was so often given short shrift by Kissinger's staff, was capable and trustworthy. Habib did very well by him and tried to massage his bruised feelings. Less sympathetic persons around the secretary were sometimes not as careful. They explained to the Japanese that Kissinger was a very busy man who had to focus on the Soviet Union and new diplomatic initiatives, such as with the PRC; these were at the heart of U.S. national security and demanded his undivided attention. On other occasions, the Japanese were told via the media that were being given short shrift because they could not keep secrets. This really offended them, even if it was partially true. The worst insult of all to the Japanese came from those who justified our treatment of Japan by aggressively questioning their standing among other Asians, reminding them, for example, of their colonial exploits and aggression.

Apart from these not very happy memories of Kissinger's involvement with Japan, the East Asian bureau spent a great deal of time dealing with Japan matters, which is what one would expect of such an important country. Much of it was economic in character and related to trade practices that were already a source of serious friction. STR (or its precursor) and Commerce dominated the handling of these issues with Japan, but in those days our bureau and our seventh floor were still able to inject far more foreign policy concern into the battles than they are today. Habib had the chutzpah and fighter qualities to make a difference. Moreover, the bureau benefitted from a strong crew of Japan specialists who knew Japan and treated it with sophistication and sympathy. Although I did my bit as well as I could, the key player was Bill Sherman, our Japan Country Director and senior specialist on the Japanese matters. I was impressed both by his bureaucratic effectiveness and by the way he selected and nurtured the careers of his fellow Japan specialists. Tending loving care from Habib, Sherman, and me took the edge off Japanese resentment over Kissinger's shabby treatment.

My third area of concentration under Habib was Korea where we were faced with a variety of problems: human rights and political governance, nuclear weapons development, U.S. military deployments, and the "Koreagate" bribery scandal. Since I have covered these at some length in my book, *Massive Entanglement, Marginal Influence, Carter and Korea in Crisis*, Brookings Institution Press, 1999, I will limit my comments here.

Human rights problems and Koreagate were most corrosive in their impact on American attitudes, which shifted in a few years from growing admiration for South Korea's economic leap to dismay over its political repression. In the eyes of many in the church, labor unions, media, and Congress, South Korea had become a political pariah - a favorite target for the bashers. The principal reason was President Park Chung Hee's abrupt, rightward shift in the early 1970s to a regime of political repression. Worried domestically that Kim Dae Jung had almost defeated him in the 1971 election and convinced, almost paranoically, that the U.S. was going to downgrade its commitment to Korea as it had in Vietnam, Park adopted self defense measures. He introduced a harsh new authoritarian constitution and other means to circumscribe political activity, let his cronies kidnap Kim Dae Jung from a Tokyo hotel and almost kill him, authorized an ill-conceived bribery operation among American officials and Congress, began a costly buildup of defense industries, and covertly launched a nuclear weapons program. All but symbolic vestiges of democracy were lost; Park's critics were harassed and jailed; and much of the urban populace was intimidated. The only bright spots were continuing progress in economic and social welfare in rural as well as urban areas. Granting that average citizens were not much affected, the atmosphere was ugly for anyone inclined to criticize Park or protest his regime.

The kidnaping of Kim Dae Jung caught peoples' attention in spectacular fashion. The crudeness and barbarity of Korean intelligence operations in Japan was exposed at great cost to Korea's prestige. Militant foreign missionaries and other human rights activists in Seoul descended on Ambassador Sneider to denounce our support of Park, and in Washington the church, labor unions, and media activated considerably more than the left liberal fringe in the Congress.

By the fall of 1974 when I arrived back in Washington the activist core within the House and Senate was firing very heavy salvos at Park Chung Hee. Congressmen Donald Fraser, a really zealous human rights advocate from Minnesota, and a small group on the House International Relations Committee were in the forefront. They were vituperative about Park and his regime, frequently demanded that Habib testify, asked for more and more reports (a process that eventually culminated in the State Department's human rights report on the world), and by 1975 began to insinuate the issue of troop withdrawals into the human rights debate. Steve Solarz, who shared some of Fraser's views on human rights but not security, allowed his East Asian Subcommittee to be used as a battleground. In the Senate there was even more bombast but less action. The most extreme critic was McGovern who called for the United States Government to withdraw military support from Korea, but he was often joined by Kennedy, Cranston and others who were more reasonable on security issues. Opposing them were a few anti-communist crusaders who sometimes rose to defend the Park regime as a bastion of the "free world." The ideological divide between these extremes was so wide that to have reasonable and rational conversation with either was very difficult, if not impossible.

Fortunately, the pro-Korea and anti-Korea groups were a minority; the majority of members in both the House and Senate approached the issue more pragmatically. However, even sympathetic individuals, such as Nunn, Glenn, Percy, Zablocki and others, were also angry with Park and tended to leave the Administration with the unpleasant task of justifying our continued relations with Park.

The peak of trouble during this period was in 1975-76 when Fraser tried first to introduce legislation that would have called for a phased withdrawal of US forces from Korea and when that was squelched a rider requiring the Administration to report each year for five years on the feasibility of a phased reduction of US forces. The latter was finally accepted by the Administration as the lesser evil.

Habib bore the brunt of the assault on Korea, testifying frequently and spending much time talking to individual representatives and senators. Most of the time I was with him, and I was usually left to follow up or make further trips to the Hill on my own or with a member of our Korean desk. It was not easy to explain to "one-issue" people the complex of reasons we needed peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. But we did so at great length, and ultimately we were able to hold the line with the help of moderate Democrats and Republicans.

Koreagate began while I was serving as deputy assistant secretary. A couple of years later it would of course become public as a major scandal, but in the period we are discussing we only had a few indications of a Korean program intended to "raise Congressional appreciation of Korean issues." We suspected Korean gifts and money through the Korean CIA and its agents but we certainly did not know the extent. Being in and out of Korean affairs complicates my memory. I do remember wondering why certain congressmen made such regular pilgrimages to Seoul. Although there were a number of conservatives who were wooed and responded positively to Korean embassy entreaties, these were only the tip of the iceberg. Many of the real targets seemed to have been Democrats, including "liberals." In short, I remember spasmodic reports of Koreans larding their lobbying with money and favors, no names, and no real evidence.

Nuclear proliferation was a major issue, and I was dealing with Korean affairs at the time we finally took action in 1975. As I mentioned earlier, my first brush with clandestine nuclear weapons programs was a similar operation in Taiwan. By the time I arrived in EA, CIA had collected a lot of information on the Korean program. I took a very strong stand against Korea being allowed to develop a nuclear weapons, not only as a general non-proliferation matter but also out of concern for the potential impact on Japan and North Korea. It was quite a long struggle before we could Kissinger to focus on this, and we first tried to deflect the Koreans by way of our allies Canada (which was providing plutonium producing heavy water reactors) and France (which was providing reprocessing technology). Once we concluded our allies weren't going to carry the bucket for us, Kissinger agreed to a frontal approach, making crystal clear to Park Chung Hee himself that continuation of the hanky-panky would undermine our security relationship. After some squirming around, Park finally agreed to stand down the program, moth-balling it rather than dismantling it. I would give Kissinger, the Department, the Embassy, and CIA good marks for a job well done.

Another issue was our security presence on the Peninsula. That was reviewed almost continually at working levels within the Executive Branch, and the virtually unanimous consensus was that we needed to maintain a significant ground combat and air combat presence in South Korea. Some of us, myself included, were open to the possibility of modest adjustments, and we knew we had to cope with arguments about the priority of reinforcing NATO, about saving money, and about the political cost of our association with Park and his human rights record. I don't recall any sympathy in the executive branch for the kind of ideas floated by Governor Jimmy Carter, although there was some resonance in Congress. In any event, the uncertainty being generated in East Asia by the denouement in Vietnam, caused me and most of my colleagues to want to hold the line firmly in Korea. I was staggered by the thinking, or lack of thinking, by people such as Fraser and McGovern - and their ambitious staffers.

Before giving you some miscellaneous recollections about my time with Habib, I want to make a concluding comment about Secretary Kissinger. Along with many of my Foreign Service colleagues who worked for him I found Kissinger very bright, conceptual, politically skillful, decisive, and terribly energetic. There is no question he had much insight about a complex world and a dazzling didactic ability to convey his views persuasively to others. But there was a distinctly negative side to the man that frequently bothered me. He was too inclined toward self adulation as well as mockery and derision of others, particularly those below him in rank, wealth, or brains. More disturbing to me, he was also too comfortable in manipulating people and facts, apparently justifying it by the nobility of the causes to which he was dedicated. When he displayed these characteristics toward hostile groups or opponents I was not too bothered, but when he dealt this way within his own camp, it really jarred my own moral standards. I found it reprehensible. I don't think my reaction was a case of sour grapes. By Kissinger's rugged standards, he generally treated me pretty well as a competent bureaucrat and useful resource person on China. I was given adequate access to sensitive information; and my views were allowed to trickle up to the great man himself or at least into his inner circle.

I must admit that I was never comfortable in Kissinger's presence, and there were times he really annoyed me by arbitrarily singling me out as the person responsible for something that he didn't like. I will never forget an infuriating instance of this. When the last withdrawals of our Air Force contingents on Taiwan were being implemented - a subject that I knew well from working on it in both Taiwan and Washington - I responded to questions from Bernie Gwertzman of the New York Times, carefully hewing to the party line and doing it on a background basis. The same day the Times story appeared, the Christian Science Monitor also printed a fuller story, the source of which I think must have been Kissinger or someone close to him. The Monitor story went beyond the limits we had set on the discussion of this issue, even though it was not a catastrophe, and the thrust - the drive to normalization with the PRC - was correct. In any case, the two newspaper stories got confused in Kissinger's mind or imagination. He accused me of having leaked sensitive information, whereas I hadn't even talked to the Christian Science Monitor. When I learned that Kissinger had the FBI investigating me, I went in fury to see Larry Eagleburger - Kissinger's man who was then the Deputy Under Secretary for Management. I raised hell about what was being done to me - the lie that was being circulated - and after a few days the matter was dropped. The next time I saw Kissinger, I protested angrily. He didn't apologize, more or less laughing off my complaints. I never forgave him for subjecting me to calumny to give cover to the real culprit, who might have been Kissinger himself. Fortunately I didn't have many experiences of that kind, but I saw a lot of it happen to others.

Despite my sharp criticism, I still strike a positive balance in assessing Henry Kissinger as secretary of state. Although it is premature to make a definitive statement about his place in history, he will certainly be regarded as one of the greatest to serve in the 20th Century, considerably more impressive than his peers.

Now for the miscellaneous points. Thinking about Koreagate reminds me of Taiwan's extensive lobbying activity in those days with both the Congress and White House. I felt uncomfortable with those efforts that surely involved money and favors. There was some similarity between Taiwan and Korea on this score, although there was no evidence of direct bribery as in the Korean case. The Taiwan government ran a well oiled operation, less brazen than the notorious "China lobby" of older days but still very generous and often obnoxious in trying to get its way - and complicate our efforts toward normalization of relations with the PRC. Ironically, the Taiwan independence lobby, working separately with different contacts, used similar techniques, resulting in lots of lobbying from the beleaguered island.

Which brings me to intelligence relationships. Habib kept the sensitive part of the process pretty much to himself. He shared information quite liberally, but he was cagey about sources of intelligence and actions he had approved. That was hard on his deputies. Fortunately, we ourselves had pretty good contacts with CIA and knew much of what the head of its East AsiDivision was doing. Habib almost always met privately with this man and allowed him to undertake operations that we might not have approved. Most of these concerned Southeast Asia. The result of this compartmentalization was that we deputies had to be careful about where we stepped lest we interfere with an activity already approved by Habib. For example, 1975-76, there was a major drive to reduce the government's overseas presence; it had gotten out of hand during the Vietnam era. The Department was eager to cooperate so long as there was a mechanism to ensure that CIA and the military intelligence agencies took their fair share. We deputies pushed and pushed for the reductions in our various countries of responsibility only to find periodically that Habib was undercutting us.

I think it was just Phil's instinct to work that way with the intelligence community. Perhaps he developed the habit from the 1950s when he had lots of CIA dealings in Cold War hot spots. I don't think he was intentionally trying to play games with us; more likely that he underestimated the potential perils of excessive secrecy. In any event senior CIA operatives needed to be watched closely, and it was the one area where I found Habib's modus operandi unhelpful. It taught me a lesson; when I became an ambassador, I demanded that the station chief, Bob Brewster give me a full account of his operations, which he did willingly, and I shared my knowledge with my DCMs, at least giving them the big picture if sometimes forced to fuzz the details.

Covert actions were naturally the kind of thing where the Central Intelligence Agency found it convenient to approach Habib alone, because they knew that one or another of his deputies might disapprove. I suspect that on occasion Habib kept us in the dark even when we asked. State-CIA relations in EA under Habib were a murky area, compared to the Holbrooke/Gleysteen era in EA, 1977-78. Finally, I was spread too thin, trying fitfully to cover other parts of East Asia at various times. The PRC and Taiwan were my steady diet, and I covered Japan and Korea most of the time, so I was able to give Northeast Asia my best. Other countries came under my wing in fits and starts. The word was "what's left over, give to Gleysteen, the junior DAS." The frequent changes in assignments taught me a lesson about the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Without competent country directors, we would have been in real trouble. I learned the importance of these key officers and began to spend more time identifying candidates.

Q: Then in 1976, you were assigned to the National Security Council. How did that come about?

GLEYSTEEEN: The assignment came from the top. When Dick Solomon was thinking of leaving his China job at the NSC in 1975, there was some pressure on me to replace him. I resisted because it would have narrowed my responsibilities. Other arrangements were made in the NSC, but in 1976 Brent Scowcroft combined China with all of East Asia in a four person unit and personally offered me the job of heading it. Kissinger let me know he wanted me in the NSC, either as a promotion or to get me out of his hair in the Department. I was attracted by the job but not its timing - just before presidential elections. So I temporized. Finally, Larry Eagleburger gave me a boy scout lecture from his perch as the under secretary supervising assignments. In effect, he told me I was under orders from Kissinger to go to the NSC. If I refused, I might find myself banished to some forsaken place. I capitulated and became the senior staff member for East Asia in the NSC around June, 1976.

I had a good relationship with Scowcroft, which was important because, absent that, I would have been miserable. His door was always open to me - even though I sometimes had to wait until 9 p.m. if I needed more than a few minutes of his time. He would always listen carefully and seemed to appreciate my advice. Of course, he got a lot of advice from many quarters - often quite often conflicting. I found that it always helped if Kissinger was leaning the direction in that I wanted to go.

Bill Hyland was the deputy. Colonel Bud McFarland, as the senior assistant, spent a lot of time sifting through the volumes and materials received from the departments and agencies to winnow out the nuggets for Hyland and Scowcroft. This was after the NSC regional and functional staffs had already screened the documents to determine which were important enough to send to the front office with a covering memo and recommendations. The decision on whether to send it on in to the president was Scowcroft's. He and only he decided what was to go the president and in what form. My memory of the three of them in their cramped quarters in the White House is dominated by the mounds of paper on their desks. I admired Brent for his diligence and intelligence and his centrist approach to foreign affairs. I didn't see enough of the NSC's over-all operations or even my own area long enough to judge the efficiency of Scowcroft's operation. I suspect he should have been more selective and had more assistance from one or two more Hylands. He was always overwhelmed by paper, compensating for covering the waterfront by sacrificing his entire private life.

I had three officers working for me: Alan Romberg (China), Jay Taylor (Korea and Japan) and Ken Quinn (Southeast Asia). My main responsibility was to supervise the work of these three analysts and to serve as Scowcroft's East Asia person.

The issues which are most memorable dealt with Korea, including tree cutting event at the DMZ in August 1976, hardline development in China, and Indochinese refugees. The murder of two of our officers at Panmunjom in August 1976 was a tense moment. I was struck by the difficulties we had in getting a clear picture of what was going on. Obviously our people in Seoul also had problems in getting reliable information. Things were made more difficult by reports coming through a variety of military, embassy, and intelligence channels. After receiving the first sketchy military report, we met in the situation room in a meeting chaired by Kissinger, I believe, with senior representatives of all involved agencies. The senior military officer was the acting chairman of the JCS, an admiral. We thrashed around in considerable confusion. It was hard to decide what we should do without knowing more about what had happened. With the exception of Habib, no one in the room was familiar with the peculiarities of Panmunjom - the location of buildings, the distribution of forces, the location of the tree, etc. Habib, by then under secretary of State, was very helpful, describing the place and suggesting that before any conclusions were reached, a full understanding of the Panmunjom operations was necessary. The picture improved greatly after the embassy sent in an analysis that put the incident in some context.

Throughout the discussions, I was struck by Kissinger's hard line. He may have genuinely favored a major military move or he may just have been speaking for the record so history would show that he was a tough guy. In any event, he proposed or inquired about the use of almost every military means available, short of nuclear weapons - including surgical missile strikes and bombing of North Korea. The JCS were extremely cautious for the same sorts of reasons cited more recently in regard to our intervention in Bosnia and Kosovo. I was a little surprised by Kissinger's aggressive position. On the other hand, I felt that the JCS were a bit too cautious. All of us, including Kissinger, backed away from proposals that were judged to risk war, and most tended to view what happened at Panmunjom as an incident, not part of an aggressive North Korean pattern.

Compared to crisis management when I returned to the State Department, I thought the Panmunjom situation was handled quite well - communications were prompt, information was distributed quickly and properly, and there were strong working groups under Habib. Art Hummel, then the assistant secretary for EA was in charge of Team A; I was in charge of Team B, the difference being working hours. Anyone who had a contribution to make was given the opportunity to do so.

As I said, there was an abysmal ignorance in Washington at the beginning of the crisis, and adequate knowledge was lacking throughout the incident. At the beginning, our major concern was North Korean motivation. Was the axing to death of two American officers a display of local zealotry or the beginning of a dangerous shift in North Korean policy on the Peninsula? What was the reaction in Beijing and Moscow? With hindsight, we discovered both the PRC and the Soviet Union were cautious. Kim Il Sung ultimately proved cautious too. After we cut down the tree with a large show of force he wrote General Stilwell, our CINC in Korea, more or less apologizing and signaling a desire to cool it.

There was some difference of views on the final decisions taken by the US government. Despite the hawks (Kissinger and Park Chung Hee) and doves (JCS), President Ford agreed with the majority, including our representatives in Korea, to demonstrate forcefully that we were not going to be pushed around, yet not to punish the DPRK with measures that might have escalated into war. At the time, I liked the concept of a tough working party backed up by a battalion of heavily armed troops and air-cover from planes deployed from the States. I felt Stilwell's idea of making our troops even more visible by deploying observers in helicopters was a bit dangerous. In retrospect, I think it was a probably a good idea.

Finally, it is worth noting that the incident occurred in the middle of the Republican Convention. Ford was already in Kansas City. As I recall Scowcroft was with him initially and then Kissinger at a later stage. The political process complicated crisis management but it didn't deflect Ford from the right decision. The hawks in the Republican Party didn't complain loudly, even though there was some snickering - cartoons mocked our use of a battalion of soldiers and F-111s flown across the Pacific to trim a tree. The Democrats never made it a partisan issue, and as far as I can tell, no damage was done to Ford politically.

The mood of the country was difficult to judge at the beginning of the crisis. Although we were still feeling the aftershocks of our withdrawal from Vietnam, we were past the low point. There was growing evidence that people agreed we should not withdraw from the world. The Panmunjom incident was a test. Our guess was that if we handled the incident with care, we could get public support, and we did.

On a more important matter, we did not entertain any radical thoughts about our troop presence in Korea during my time under Scowcroft. When candidate Jimmy Carter first broached his deep thoughts about the matter in 1975, I didn't know much about the governor or that he planned open heart surgery on our security commitment to Korea. Many candidates in the primary said many strange things, and I didn't pay much attention to them. By the time Carter became the Democratic Party nominee I had heard about his pledge to withdraw all our combat troops from Korea. I thought it was a crazy idea, the exact opposite of what we should be doing.

We talked a lot within the government about our military presence in Korea. I had a staffer who toyed with Carter's idea of a pullback. We also had an NSC colleague dealing with Europe who wanted to transfer troops from Korea to Europe so as to reinforce NATO. On the outside some of our friends in the human rights movement, Jerry Cohen, for example, talked in Carterish ways. Some of them must have helped author Carter's policy. But withdrawal of forces from Korea was not on our minds; on the contrary, we were under great pressure to sustain our East Asian military deployments.

As I have said previously, I myself was open minded about the shape of our military presence in South Korea. I couldn't imagine an intelligent president withdrawing our deterrent capability while the North was under a hostile communist dictatorship. But I felt the size and structure of that presence could be discussed. When I first moved to the NSC, I was suspicious of our military's drum-beat about its needs, and I thought their requirements were over-stated. I would have considered some modest changes in the size and composition of our forces in South Korea. But Carter's call for complete withdrawal of our ground forces struck me as objectively dangerous as well as out of tune with public sentiment. Most of us at the NSC didn't think it would ever fly. That may be the reason I don't remember any analysis of it for President Ford.

Around election time in 1976, Evelyn Colbert, at that time the National Intelligence Officer for Northeast Asia, came to tell me about an on-going study that indicated the North Korean order of battle was much larger than previously thought. I was surprised, since I had assumed that even our old figures might be somewhat overstated. But the new study was being done carefully, using the latest photographic evidence. In any event, I wasn't qualified to dispute the conclusions. It was a worrisome development. Evelyn left me a paper summarizing the procedures used and the results of the intelligence community's work, which I passed around to the appropriate people. Our intelligence agencies had been aware of North Korea's greater deployments for as long as a year, because, with the end of the war in Vietnam, they were finally able to deploy adequate numbers of photographic interpreters to Korea. The actual buildup of North Korean forces must have occurred some years earlier, although the concentration of forces near the DMZ was perhaps more recent.

Although the new intelligence came to us in stages, there was sufficient evidence for concern by the fall of 1976. Initially, the new findings were circulated mostly within intelligence channels and didn't get the attention they deserved. General Stilwell in Seoul was properly briefed, and he ordered a higher state of readiness for his forces, but it was not until the Carter Administration took over that the findings became a source of contention among policy makers. The wrangle began for me in March 1977 while we were struggling to get the intelligence community to agree on an assessment to accompany PRM #13, the study of the troop withdrawal issue. By the spring of 1978 successive briefings on intelligence studies convinced me nothing except symbolic withdrawals could be justified, and about a year later the case was so strong that President Carter was forced put his plan on hold, pending a review to be held after the next presidential election.

Let me turn briefly to the PRC. During 1976, Mao Zedong died and was succeeded by his designated successor, a little known regional official named Hua Guofeng. Mao's widow, Jiang Qing, and her radical leftist colleagues seemed to be gaining the upper hand. Deng Xiaoping was harassed and retreated for his life to the south under the wing of Marshal Ye Jianying, a powerful and prestigious military peer of Mao. A hard line seemed ascendant in China. Changes introduced by Zhou En-lai and Deng were suffocated by leftist orthodoxy. In this atmosphere, normalization of US-PRC relations went into a deep freeze. There were no interesting meetings of US and Chinese officials. When Senator Hugh Scott traveled to China and initiated a discussion of normalization, Zhang Chunqiao, the tough communist ideologue from Shanghai, talked of forcibly liberating Taiwan. This left-wing distraction didn't last long thanks to a sudden coup-like strike by the PLA organized by Marshal Ye under the authority of Hua Guofeng. The "gang of four" were arrested, tried, and jailed in a decisive shift in the domestic balance of power that soon brought Deng back into the leadership. Nevertheless, combined with President Ford's inhibitions, the turmoil within China extinguished any thoughts of progress toward normalization before our elections. While things were relatively quiet on the policy front, developments in China remained, of course, a subject of intense high level interest.

In general, Asian issues were surprisingly muted during the American election process in 1976. I don't recall major anxieties or demands stemming from election, for example, no effort to zero in on Carter's Korean pledge. The closest linkage came from Southeast Asia issues. There were tricky refugee problems which Quinn, having been close to the subject for sometime and enjoying a good relation with Scowcroft, handled very well, mostly on his own with little help from me. Quinn's work required close consultation with Congress as well as various non-governmental organizations that worked in the refugee field. Refugees were a politically sensitive matter, not so much in a partisan sense, but from the importance many in Congress, commendably, attached to victims of the war. The Vietnam war was not a campaign issue. Apparently, no one wanted to open wounds in an enterprise that had been supported by both Democrats and Republicans. Nevertheless, the bitter divide among Americans over the war made us very careful in anything dealing with Vietnam or Cambodia.

I was on the NSC essentially while it was marking time before the inauguration of a president. It was not a stimulating experience, although I admired most of the people for whom I worked and the people who worked for me. From the day Carter won, we were dead in the water. The atmosphere was depressing, as grey as the exterior of the Executive Office Building in which we worked.

During a brief six months in the NSC I was not involved enough with President Ford to develop any feel for his personal views. In fact, I had a better understanding of where his administration wanted to go on China when I was in the Department. However, my tour gave me some appreciation of how the making of foreign policy looked from the perspective of the national security advisor. I had quite a few conversations with Scowcroft during which he shared his views quite candidly. I got a sense of how the State Department "sausage factory" looked to others, and I observed the inter-agency battles with some detachment. My sense of how the NSC functioned was somewhat skewed, since Secretary of State Kissinger was so dominant in the administration.

I was impressed with the NSC staff's ability to influence the president through routine staff work. Almost all memoranda going to the president had to be summarized and commented on to meet presidential requirements. This opened a Pandora's box of subjective influences from his staff members. Effectively, we exercised a kind of censorship that made me somewhat uneasy. The NSC could be used for good or for abuse; the direction was primarily determined by the adviser. Scowcroft was superbly fair about this.

We spent considerable time preparing elaborate briefing materials for the new Democratic team and guessing who would be involved in the foreign policy process. We heard about Vance and Brzezinski soon after the election, but the levels under them were not known for sometime.

In December, I learned that Brzezinski wanted to have the prominent young scholar Michel Oksenberg as his China expert. Since China was the biggest chunk of my job in the NSC, this news reinforced my feeling that I should pull out. After Brzezinski moved in as part of the transition, I went to see him - we had met a number of times while he was an academic. Without exhibiting any enthusiasm, he asked me to stay on the NSC staff, which I declined on grounds there wasn't room for two China experts. I then proceeded to extract myself and was replaced by Mike Armacost.

Q: In January 1977 you moved back to your old office at the State Department. How did this come about and what happened in EA?

GLEYSTEN: Not long after my session with Brzezinski, Phil Habib called me to say that Vance and he thought I would be a good candidate as the senior deputy to Dick Holbrooke who had been designated as the new assistant secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Phil failed to tell me that this was his idea and that Holbrooke was determined to choose his own senior deputy. While furious, Holbrooke, nevertheless, agreed to talk to me, and we met for lunch in late December. I am sure Holbrooke, who didn't know me, thought of me as too old (I was 50) and too conventional. I in turn remembered him as a bright, brash young officer whom I had seen briefly in Vietnam in 1968 when accompanying Joe Sisco on a visit. At the time, Dick was working for Bob Komer in the CORDS headquarters in Saigon. Watching both of them wipe their eye glasses with their shirt tails, I thought they sounded too gung-ho about their operation, but I knew Dick was later involved with the peace talks and had left the Foreign Service over Vietnam policy. In any event, the mind set on both sides of the lunch table was not exactly auspicious. Even so, Dick and I managed to be open minded about each other, and by the end of a long lunch it seemed to me that we might hit it off as a useful match. Dick was disarmed by my relaxed answer when he asked me how I would feel working for someone 15 years younger, and he came across to me as a capable, bright high flyer with obvious political savvy who seemed to be on the right track when it came to issues close to my heart. In particular I wanted to know whether he was interested in pursuing normalization with the PRC, which he was. We also discussed the Korea troop withdrawal issue. He denied being the author of Carter's scheme, and we agreed it would be a very bad move. We assumed Carter would be forced to drop or modify it once he was in office - a very bad prediction from both of us. Not long after the lunch Dick invited me to become his senior deputy. Thus began an unlikely but successful collaboration.

In early January, before inauguration, Dick arranged for us to see Vance, whom I had gotten to know superficially at a variety of long weekend conferences on foreign policy chaired by Harriman. We focused on China, which we discussed at length, and we also talked about Korea, particularly about troop withdrawal. Vance and Holbrooke sought my perspective both as a specialist and person familiar with recent dealings. I felt comfortable with discussion; Vance was very positive about moving promptly to normalize relations with China, and he agreed that Carter's plans on troop withdrawal could not go ahead without careful advance study of the consequences in Korea and East Asia generally.

Apart from this kind of policy review on all important issues, Dick and I spent much of initial time on management issues, including of course staffing problems. I was to be the senior deputy with responsibility for Northeast Asia. Dick also wanted me to free him as much as possible on the management side so he could be in the front trenches of policy making - in the State Department, White House, and Congress, and with the public. And that is the way it turned out. He consulted me on every personnel change he wanted to make in the bureau as well as ambassadorial and other senior assignments. He brought me into that process completely; I don't think there was ever an exception. Holbrooke made a lot of changes in the bureau, some of which were not well received by the career Foreign Service, including me. He was compulsive about starting with a clean slate, assuming incumbents had been tainted, or would be seen as tainted, by the Kissinger years, whereas I was convinced that most of us had played useful roles, for example, on China, Korea, and even Vietnam. Dick's urge to change seemed to be his own reading of how the political winds were blowing, the need for a fresh look and cleaning out the remnants of the Vietnam era. I didn't sense that Vance felt the same way, and I argued the merits of continuity. As a practical matter there were relatively few changes in Northeast Asia and quite a few in Southeast Asia - more than usual in transitions but not enough to call a purge.

Among the officers who suffered the most from Holbrooke's sweep was Art Hummel, the outgoing assistant secretary, who felt insulted and said so. The changes were an implied criticism of his leadership; he was never given a chance to brief Dick on what had happened on his watch; there was no send-off for a highly regarded career officer; and if he had a message for Holbrooke, it had to go through me. Holbrooke shunned Hummel, putting me between a new boss and a friend whom I had long admired. I didn't like it, and I said so. Fortunately, Habib and others treated Hummel better, and he got a good assignment as ambassador to Pakistan.

My colleagues as deputies were Bob Oakley for Southeast Asia and, after some time, Evelyn Colbert for the rest of the area. Erland Heginbotham was the deputy for economic affairs. He had a personal relationship of some kind with Dick, who liked his questioning attitude and econometric ideas about how we should deal with a dynamic region. We were often on opposite sides of an argument; e.g. his idea that we should concentrate our aid on Burma, because, statistically, it would be most efficient use of limited our resources.

A major focus for me was the production of policy papers and memoranda by the bureau for the secretary or one of his senior staff. Although I did some drafting at the beginning, I quickly learned to delegate most of the work to the desks headed by Harry Thayer for China and Bob Rich for Korea. For the China papers, Thayer in turn assembled some extremely talented staff members, including Alan Romberg from S/P and Stapleton Roy from the desk. Working directly with the drafting officers, I supervised the design and review phases of the paper writing. I was proud of the product in most cases, although we had our share of monstrosities.

By far the most important papers in the first few months of Vance's leadership were on China and Korea. All we had tried to do on China while I was in the NSC was to ride out the political storm in the PRC and await our own presidential election. By the end of the 1976 there more and more indications that Deng Xiaoping was returning to power presumably with the policies he had espoused before his downfall, and with a new president, we were finally hopeful we could soon move ahead with a major effort toward full normalization of relations. Yet there was still much doubt. For all the rhetoric about wanting progress on China, I was far from sure that Carter was really going to move. The 1976 election was not a referendum on our China policy; China was not even an election issue.

In our first meeting I made clear to Vance and Holbrooke that I had long favored normalization. Acknowledging that China had been very difficult in 1976, I suggested there was again hope for progress if Deng continued his climb back to power. I urged that we test the waters in a systematic way to see whether there was any reciprocal interest in the PRC. The crunch problem was Taiwan, which obviously had to be handled with great care. I remember putting very heavy stress on two points. One was my personal view that Taiwan would definitely survive the strain of de-recognition. Its economic progress and easing political constraints would provide a helpful buffer. The second was my conviction that we would do better with both the Chinese and Soviets if we "played it straight," letting each know that we were dealing with the other because of common interests and acknowledging to both we had important disagreements with both. In effect, I questioned the benefit to us of Kissinger's implicit tilt toward China. Vance seemed positive on all these points, perhaps overly so regarding the second one. In the name of an even hand, I later discovered, he at least subconsciously rated arms control issues with the USSR more important than moving briskly on normalization.

Since Vance, Brzezinski, and many others have discussed how the Carter Administration went about normalization, I will limit my comments mostly to main impressions. Vance had us prepare a memorandum from him to the President arguing the case for moving ahead with the PRC. In an effort to engender State/NSC collaboration we brought Oksenberg fully into the process, even though we assumed he was privately doing something parallel for Brzezinski. As part of the effort we reviewed the quite complete files that Kissinger had left us. They were kept in my office after being turned over to us by Winston Lord. Oksenberg, completely new to this material, was the most eager reader. Of course, the files contained vital information, including the pledges made by Nixon, Kissinger, and Ford, but not the bombshells suspected by some of the new people. The record showed clearly why the PRC had reacted negatively to some of our policies. The Chinese felt that they had been led down a garden path on prompt normalization and resented it.

I thought we did well by Vance, producing a document for the president making the case for normalization in terms that I found more accurate and persuasive than some of the rhetoric from the Nixon period. None of us knew Carter's real intentions. He had spoken publicly in favor of normalization - almost every one had, and he had privately told Vance he was serious about moving ahead. In any event, after reading the paper, the president convened a meeting in the spring of 1977 that was attended by Vance, Habib, Holbrooke and me from the Department, Brzezinski and Oksenberg from the NSC, and, I believe, Harold Brown. Carter gave us a little homily about normalization and his support for it. I was then excused while the others remained to discuss modalities. I still wasn't sure that Carter was determined to push forward, but I was glad that he spoke as he had. As a result of this session we were charged with producing a paper, PRM 24, on the specifics of normalization. Vance's interest in the China issue was then at its height. Preparation of this blueprint was time consuming. The paper was very thorough and covered all the issues. Like the earlier paper, it reflected the view that our China policy should not be governed simply by anti-Soviet considerations, but by a more comprehensive view of strategic interests, including, of course, our need to counter the Soviet threat. Vance soon became a missionary for this argument, which suited him as he negotiated SALT and other issues with the Soviets. The paper also reflected my concern to minimize the damage to Taiwan that would be the price of normalization. This led to some controversy later. At the outset, every one agreed that we had to be careful about Taiwan, since we had a lot at stake there and would have the world watching to see how we dealt with an ally. I probably had the most intense feeling about this issue, being the only one of us to have served in Taiwan, but I didn't find much quarrel with my position. I was certain Vance would not be a party to any deal undermining Taiwan.

PRM 24 was completed some time in June 1977. Again, I was not included in the deliberations with the President that resulted in the decision to send Secretary Vance to Beijing in August 1977. The accounts in Vance's and Brzezinski's memoirs more or less confirm what I remember being told at the time: Carter's commitment to pursue normalization was clear, but not the priority he would accord it. Vance wanted to get the Panama issue out of the way before facing the Congress with the consequences for Taiwan of normalization with the PRC. He also wanted parallel progress on Soviet issues. Thus, although he was determined to get started, he was not in a great hurry to complete the process. At this early stage Brzezinski favored pushing ahead with normalization, but given his concern about the Soviets, he was even more interested in reaffirming and underscoring the tilt toward China symbolized by the Shanghai Communique - as was Secretary Brown. Faced with this complex of concerns, President Carter declared himself resolved to carry through with normalization, and he approved a draft communique to this effect that Vance could use if he achieved enough progress in Beijing. At the same time, however, Carter opted for a negotiating tactic that flawed the Vance mission to China.

Based in part on the results of extensive consultation with Congress, much of it conducted by Holbrooke, the President decided for domestic political reasons that we should try to get Chinese acceptance of a recognition formula that would improve on the Japanese model, allowing us to retain an unofficial US governmental presence on Taiwan in the form of a consulate or liaison mission. We were to argue with the PRC that a governmental but unofficial presence of some kind in Taiwan was a practical necessity for us because of our extensive involvement in Taiwan, and that this presence would in no way constitute continuing diplomatic recognition of the Taiwan regime. If the Chinese rejected this scheme, it was my clear understanding that we would then fall back to the Japanese formula of no governmental representation. As I recall, I favored authority to retreat quickly to the Japanese formula, since I had personally witnessed Deng Xiaoping slap down Kissinger's effort to do virtually the same thing in 1974. Nevertheless, having accompanied Holbrooke on most of his consultations on the Hill, I more or less accepted the domestic political rationale of trying to improve on the Japanese formula to ease widespread anxiety about switching recognition from the ROC to the PRC. Whatever may have been said later in self justification, none of us at the time - specifically including Brzezinski and Oksenberg - saw the tactic as a deal breaker so long as we handled it carefully. Unfortunately, circumstances during and immediately after the Vance trip made it appear that Vance had naively sought a better deal for Taiwan than we could have realistically expected, causing a major setback in the normalization process.

In his first meeting in Beijing with Foreign Minister Huang Hua, Secretary Vance made a very systematic presentation of our position, including the points about a governmental presence on Taiwan, peaceful resolution of the unification issue, and limited defensive arms transfers to Taiwan. Hua's response the next day was negative, and during a subsequent session Deng characterized Vance's position as a retreat from the Shanghai communique. Although Vance stressed that his proposals were a starting point for discussion, he did not offer any immediate sign of flexibility. The Chinese, whose appetites had been whetted by the Carter Administration's rhetoric and reaffirmation of Nixon policy, were clearly disappointed. Yet this was hardly the first time they had faced tough American negotiators, and they displayed no hostility. The Chinese treated us in the same normally friendly fashion they accorded to important U.S. visitors. For our part, we were quite aware that if we wanted to succeed we would have to yield on the representation issue, and we left Beijing feeling that we had begun a dialogue on a very difficult process. This was the tone of the very objective report we sent back to the White House.

As we were leaving our Tokyo stopover on our way back to Washington, you can imagine how stunned we were to learn that a Hearst correspondent (Wallach) claimed that members of the NSC told him they saw "progress" in Vance's discussions in Beijing, quite at odds with what Vance had actually reported. Regardless of who said what to whom in Washington press circles, this story, which made us look like fools or deceptive manipulators of the press, infuriated the Chinese who issued a prompt denial. Some days later Deng himself publicly characterized the Vance position as a setback to progress.

As one of the drafters of Vance's report to the White House, I shared Vance's anger over this Washington interpretation - so much so that I half convinced myself that Brzezinski must have been the source and deliberately set Vance up for a fall. Although this was probably unfair of me, it was symptomatic of the uncomfortable relationship that had already developed by this time between the NSC and ourselves. In any event, based on my observation of many previous conversations with Chinese leaders, I thought Vance was competent in his presentation of our initial position on normalization. Even though he was not as polished or as free wheeling as Kissinger, he also conveyed clearly that the administration was adopting a sophisticated mixture firmness and flexibility to deal with the Soviet threat. To be sure, the Chinese were not thrilled to learn of a U.S. view that placed the PRC as only one of several special American concerns. Vance made that point quite skillfully, and it was an important message for the PRC to hear. My main criticism of Vance's performance was his failure to signal more clearly that we were prepared to compromise regarding our future presence in Taiwan, but even so, I assumed the Chinese knew we would eventually retreat. In short, I fully expected another round of talks and some progress toward compromise. And this might have occurred sooner if the U.S. Government had been able to keep its big mouth shut.

Our first move on the normalization chess board was clumsy. The bar for the Taiwan jump was set unrealistically high; we underestimated the damage of overloading the administration's first negotiating contact with Deng; and in striking contrast to Kissinger, we screwed up in briefing our own press. Obviously there was no collusion between Deng and Brzezinski, but each for his own reasons decided to categorize the Vance trip as a "failure." This somewhat unfair judgment prevails today.

The unhappy outcome of the Vance visit to China did not smother expectations for progress on the China front, and we continued busying ourselves with our growing contacts with the PRC, holding Taiwan's hand, and conducting studies about various aspects of normalization. Among these I have already mentioned the very careful examination we made of arms transfers to Taiwan, trying to determine the kinds of defensive weapons Taiwan needed to maintain a "credible deterrent" against a PRC attack, which in those days was not a great danger. Although there was some effort on the part of our military to provide Taiwan with unnecessary items, the study for the most part was an objective one and served as a guideline for our behavior even before normalization. Another important study was the legal aspect of abrogating or renouncing the security treaty with the ROC. This was a complicated matter of special interest to Secretary Vance, and it was not completed before I left the scene to go to Korea.

By the spring of 1978, it was apparent that Soviet policy had taken an aggressive turn in many parts of the world - i.e. the Horn of Africa, Angola, Afghanistan, etc.. Our new friends in China and Americans such as Brzezinski were quick to recognize and perhaps exaggerate this, but many others without such a pronounced animus against the Russians also sensed the hard line and saw the need for somewhat tougher policies. Vested interests burst into action - variously favoring a big buildup in defense, a tough line across the board with the Soviets, playing the China card in new games, etc.. Vance - and even more the President - seemed slow in facing up to this phase of Soviet policy, partly perhaps because they were so committed to a more hopeful prognosis about detente with the USSR. Of course, both men eventually accepted the facts. Carter swung around quite far toward Brzezinski's position. While not sharing Carter's previous naivete about the USSR, Vance also had to toughen his position. Yet he seemed distinctly reluctant and clearly uncomfortable with the tactics of flamboyant confrontation and games playing that were so elemental in Brzezinski's style.

Whatever the reason, Vance appeared a bit soft in confronting the new twist in Soviet behavior, and this worked in Brzezinski's favor. Even though Vance had far more prestige and clout in the Administration and Congress, Brzezinski's posture was more appealing and popular in the Cold War atmosphere of the time. He denounced the Russians and simplified the world into a black and white picture of zero-sum games. He wouldn't, for example, mention Vietnam without adding the prefix "Soviet proxy."

Vance and Brzezinski didn't have major differences over normalization with China, but their differing approaches did affect the debate about many other aspects of our dealings with China. In the struggle I felt Vance did not exert himself when he should have, and I winced as Brzezinski took advantage of this and sought to emulate Kissinger in his NSC days. He began to invite the PRC ambassador to his office for chats - without telling the secretary of State. He maneuvered the president into making important decisions without Vance's participation. It had become obvious to many that the secretary of State and the NSC advisor did not get along. They were very unlike and saw the world through different prisms. This high level friction accumulated to become a serious impediment to objective treatment of important questions, such as security relations with the PRC, the conduct of Brzezinski's visit to China, and relations with Vietnam. In dealing with these matters I usually found myself in the middle, but nearer to Vance's side. On the security issue, Brzezinski wanted to flaunt our China card in front of the Russians, using various devices to underscore our potential for altering the strategic balance between the Russians and Chinese. Effectively, he favored an explicit tilt toward the PRC, symbolized by a visit of the secretary of Defense to China (fortunately delayed until after normalization), close intelligence cooperation, military contacts, relaxed controls on dual-use technology, tolerance of allied military sales, and possibly even military assistance in limited areas of defense. Brzezinski calculated that the Soviets could be bullied this way into a more cooperative posture, while Vance worried that some of these actions would only antagonize the Russians, stimulating the arms race and damaging prospects for detente in addition to worrying many of our allies. From my less exalted level, I shared Vance's concerns, but I felt we should energetically counter Soviet behavior - mostly by ensuring our own military superiority and trying promptly to normalize our relations with the PRC. Both of these sober actions would convey the right strategic message to the Soviets without the cost the explicit tilt in security.

As I noted earlier I did not object to some forms of military and intelligence cooperation with China, but I was strongly, outspokenly opposed to military assistance to the PRC. My problems began in the previous administration with our approval of British military sales, but in this earlier period the limited measures proposed were conceived as compromises with our allies and China, not pieces of a grand scheme to encircle the Soviet empire. Initially I thought Brzezinski was going to continue Kissinger's cautious approach, but in early 1978 Mike Oksenberg began trying out ideas on me that I found alarming.

Reflecting his boss, Oksenberg talked not only of our interest in a "stable, prosperous, and friendly" China but also a "strong" China, and he acknowledged that this might mean possible military assistance to China by our allies or even ourselves. Apart from the questionable effect on Soviet policy, I argued that China's Asian neighbors would be appalled by such action, which would also make Taiwan's defense more complicated. But even more important, the concept failed to take account of the prospect that at some future point US and PRC interest might well clash. This consideration seems pedestrian in today's climate, but in those days the intellectual infection of US-PRC military collaboration spread from NSC whizz kids to significant numbers of sensible people in the defense community as well as less sensible persons with various axes to grind.

My recollection is that Vance and I were among the most cautious on security assistance to the PRC, and as a practical matter during Vance's tenure military activities with China were minimized. Later, several foolish decisions were made by the Carter and Reagan administrations, particularly help to the Chinese with the avionics for their F-8 fighter bomber. To put it bluntly: Brzezinski was an ignoramus on East Asia in general; Oksenberg was very savvy about China but not about its neighbors; and neither man paid enough attention to their colleague, Mike Armacost, who was both very expert on East Asia and to our own bureaucracy.

Although I was only briefly and peripherally involved, policy toward Vietnam was another example of how antagonism between State and the NSC complicated an already complicated situation. Like President Ford, President Carter did not feel legally bound by the Kissinger era agreement to aid Vietnam in the post-war period. Vietnamese failure to comply with key provisions of the Paris settlement provided ample grounds to refuse, and Americans generally were lukewarm or opposed to relations with such a recent enemy. However, both the President and Vance as well as a bi-partisan minority in Congress favored normalization of relations with Vietnam and gave the issue considerable priority. I am not sure why. Perhaps it reflected the need for expiation among some who served in the new administration. In any event Leonard Woodcock, former president of the UAW and later Ambassador to China, was promptly dispatched to Vietnam on a fact finding mission, and his favorable report was the trigger for an effort toward normalization that was to last twenty years.

While I had no burning sense of sin about our actions in the war, I too favored a rapprochement with Vietnam. Partly this was my standard reaction of wanting to deal with all significant governments that were effectively in power; partly it was a feeling that it would be smart to try to encourage Vietnam away from its steadily increasing dependence on the Soviet Union. Treating Vietnam as a pariah and Soviet proxy in the style of Brzezinski struck me as satisfying Chinese, not US national interests. To be sure, if I had been forced to choose, I would have given priority to moving ahead with China. Although Vance and Holbrooke shared these opinions and pushed negotiations with Vietnam near to success, ultimately they were unable to prevent the issue from being mired down in an ideological debate and questionable reasoning on our part. Brzezinski won the battle over whether we could risk normalizing with Vietnam in the midst of trying to do the same with the PRC. Effectively, we pulled back and halted the process with Vietnam.

Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia obscured the error of our ways. While this crude Vietnamese action took place after I moved on to Seoul, I was still in Washington while the bloody Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia and began their aggressive border incursions against Vietnam. If the Vietnamese in response had limited themselves to punishing counterstrikes, history might have taken quite a different turn, but when they went on to occupy most of the country and establish an alternative government under Hun Sen, they blighted prospects for an early opening to the non-communist world. We adopted hostile policies that helped push Vietnam further and further into the Soviet camp. In late 1978, early 1979, I was amazed to learn in Seoul that Brzezinski had given the Chinese a virtual green light to "teach a lesson" to the Vietnamese by a limited military strike and again later when we joined the Chinese and some ASEAN countries in a loose cooperation with the Khmer Rouge against the Vietnamese and Hun Sen. Perhaps if I had held some responsibility in Washington, I might have felt differently, but I doubt it. After my retirement I spent many hours over many years arguing with former colleagues for a more sensible policy toward Vietnam.

The third issue I want to mention was the most unpleasant for me and my colleagues in the State Department, namely the NSC's preemption of the core negotiations with the PRC on normalization. As it became increasingly transparent that Vance and Brzezinski were vying with each other for presidential support and control of strategy toward the USSR, PRC officials began to play games with us, as they had done before. Sensing that Brzezinski was eager to put US-PRC cooperation high on the US policy agenda as an anti-Soviet strategy, they welcomed a dialogue with him beginning in the fall of 1977. Through Oksenberg, Holbrooke and I were more or less aware of the NSC advisor's contacts with the Chinese, but we were never consulted. In his memoirs Brzezinski claimed that "Holbrooke and his State Department colleagues looked increasingly to the White House for leadership," because Vance was preoccupied with other matters. This is a shameless distortion of the facts: Brzezinski knew damn well that Holbrooke and I were struggling to prevent him from usurping what we believed to be the State Department's proper function. Anyway, Brzezinski had no trouble soliciting a Chinese invitation to visit Beijing, which was publicized along with Brzezinski's courteous acceptance in November, triggering a fight with Vance, Habib, and Holbrooke, who recognized it as a power play and immediately opposed it. During the next few months Brzezinski used his proximity to his boss to lobby Carter into approval of a visit, while Vance struggled to head him off or instead to have Vice President Mondale be the emissary to China. Brzezinski won the battle in March, reflecting a major set back in Vance's standing with Carter.

Under presidential instructions, we began preparations for a Brzezinski trip to China. This time the process was centered in the NSC with only the minimum necessary help from the State Department - and sometimes not even that. The formal decision making process was relatively proper. Whatever reservations Vance may have had regarding complications in his dealings with the Soviets, the State Department strongly supported a major push by Brzezinski toward normalization, and we were delighted when the president instructed Brzezinski to tell the Chinese that "the United States has made up its mind." Thus Brzezinski was authorized to agree to the Japanese formula of no U.S. governmental presence in Taiwan, although on security matters he was still instructed to stress our insistence on a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan problem and our intention to provide defensive arms to the island. These terms constituted our best shot to achieve success on an acceptable basis, and we all supported them without qualification. Speaking for myself, I also had little trouble with the way Brzezinski planned to underscore the vigor of our response to expansionist Soviet policies, even though I was openly unenthusiastic about his plan to take along a number of senior advisors to be publicly cozy with Chinese counterparts on matters of strategy, military intelligence, science and technology, and economics.

Despite this substantial consensus about the national security advisor's instructions for Beijing, the NSC had effectively cut State out of the policy development process. Essentially, Brzezinski and Oksenberg developed positions secretly, obtained the President's concurrence, and then presented them to Vance and us as a fait accompli. I suspect the NSC had some pangs of conscience about deflecting the bureaucracy from giving them the benefit of its judgment, because Oksenberg got permission employ a CIA analyst as a secret advisor. The person he selected was a good friend of mine - feisty and imaginative, but not someone I would rely on for balanced opinions.

To some extent my role also breached the NSC's iron curtain around preparations. Although I was kept well away from the inner deliberative process within the White House, Brzezinski and Oksenberg needed someone such as me to vet key papers and critique their ideas. Very transparently, they also enjoyed using me as a semi-legitimate way of cutting out Holbrooke - and infuriating him. Despite my resentment, I in turn felt it was my duty as a senior career officer to try to insinuate State Department views in ways that would make the visit as successful as possible. On many occasions I was asked by Oksenberg for comments about papers, but I was never allowed to keep a copy, and I was always enjoined "not to tell Holbrooke." While always taking advantage of the opportunity to comment, I made clear that I strongly disapproved of our not being given copies and would keep Holbrooke informed. Each time I immediately reported back to Holbrooke who always hit the ceiling. However, sore as he was over this manipulative abuse, Holbrooke to his credit never tried to stop me from my rather truculent cooperation with the NSC.

As the time approached for Brzezinski's visit in May 1978 our problems became even more excruciating. The State Department had to fight to get Holbrooke and me onto Brzezinski's delegation as the State Department contingent. On the plane Oksenberg conspiratorially pulled me aside to ask me to review Brzezinski's talking points, which I did with Brzezinski himself, and I insisted they be shown to Dick. Initially they were not and other papers were treated the same way - to the point that I refused any further cooperation. Holbrooke was finally shown the papers.

Matters did not improve after we arrived in Beijing. To note the positive first, Brzezinski was able to achieve the beginnings of a breakthrough on normalization - as Vance conceivably might have a year earlier if he had the same instructions. Moreover, with the exception of some childish anti-Soviet pranks in public, Brzezinski conducted himself skillfully. On normalization, he effectively conveyed Carter's readiness to move promptly, resolved the issue of unofficial US representation on Taiwan without much trouble, made very clear to Deng that we did not want to be contradicted in our public insistence that the Taiwan issue be resolved peacefully, and signaled indirectly that we would need to provide limited defensive arms to Taiwan during a historical transition period. Deng's failure to denounce this latter point as a violation of the Shanghai Communique, etc. struck me as a possible break through, and I immediately said so to Brzezinski when I read the transcript of the session. Although I was less impressed by Brzezinski's customary anti-Soviet rhetoric, I liked his robust defense of our policy toward the USSR and his asking Deng to stop publicly berating us when we had enforced the balance of power so effectively for so many years. I felt this pugnacious point was a considerable improvement over Kissinger's normal response.

In other respects, however, Brzezinski's behavior was outrageous, particularly his delight in humiliating Holbrooke and the State Department both in private and public - behavior that would have been unimaginable for his Chinese hosts, who of course took careful note of this gratuitous advertisement of strains within the American camp. Although I seriously fault Holbrooke for his part in this battle of egos, Brzezinski was the instigator, and to this day I consider his conduct a national disgrace.

Holbrooke and I were included in the lower level meetings in Beijing as well as the brief greeting sessions with Deng Xiaoping and Hua Guofeng, but we were ostentatiously excluded from the key meetings with these leaders, a very clear break in our practice since 1973. Given my blunt, almost violent argument with him about the importance of having State Department representation at these sessions, I was naturally angered to read a few years later in Brzezinski's memoirs that "other members of the delegation accepted this restriction, except for Holbrooke, who made a great issue of personal privilege out of his exclusion." On the plane on the way home, resentments boiled over. Once again I, but not Holbrooke, had been allowed to read the memoranda of conversation, and once again I had demanded they be shown to Holbrooke. They eventually were but not before a disgusting shouting match among all of us and the threat of a school yard physical battle between Holbrooke and Oksenberg. It was awful, probably the nadir of my bureaucratic experience.

Despite the clash of two powerful egos, I never fully understood why two very intelligent people behaved as Brzezinski and Holbrooke did. It may not have done much serious damage to US foreign policy, but it certainly didn't help the cause. To show how personal it was, I might note that I am fairly sure that if the NSC could have invited me to attend those meetings without Holbrooke, they would have done so. It didn't help matters that Ambassador Woodcock was included in all of the meetings with Chinese leaders, because he was playing along with Brzezinski; getting his instructions from the NSC, not the State Department. Fortunately, records of all the meetings became available to us, and I always felt that they accurately reflected what had happened. I am not sure that I would have had the same confidence in Nixon's NSC apparatus.

The net effect of this strain within the administration, when added to the hard line taken by the Soviets and our own tough reaction to it, was to take us back toward the simplistic bipolar world where the line was "let's be good to the PRC as a way of putting pressure on the Soviet Union." This suited the Chinese, because it gave them leverage in their dealings with us. Furthermore, we had a secretary of State in these circumstances who was sensible, judicious, and a real gentleman, but not very adept in the ugly kind of infighting that took place under our Christian leader, Jimmy Carter. After the struggle, the NSC became the real manager of our relations with the PRC, even though most of the expertise was in the Department of State. I thought it was a risky way to conduct policy.

After the end of the Brzezinski trip, I wrote him a memorandum, giving him my evaluation of the visit and criticizing our treatment. At the time I felt I was being pretty hard on him, but on re-reading the memo a few years ago, I found it too polite. I did compliment him on the outcome of the Taiwan discussion with Deng, stating the visit was more successful than I had anticipated. Of course, I gave Vance and Holbrooke copies of my memorandum.

All this happened in the last few months of my tour in Washington. Just before leaving for Korea, I also wrote a long polite memorandum to Vance that temporarily strained our relationship. As objectively as I could, I discussed where we stood with the PRC - the pluses and the minuses. I praised his role in the development of our policy towards the PRC; pointed out that the Brzezinski visit might well prove to be the breakthrough for us; criticized the way we were being pushed around by the NSC; and urged that Vance insert himself back in firmly with the President. In my memorandum I asked for an appointment, which he granted. We had a very frank private conversation during which I re-emphasized the need for him to take firm hold of the reins of foreign policy. Of course, I was being presumptuous. I was emboldened to do what I did by the power of my feelings, and I am sure Vance got the same advice from many others. He listened to me in obvious pain, made no comment, and changed the subject.

Finally on the PRC, I have two thoughts. First, I thought then and still believe today that our policy toward China was essentially balanced. During the first phase of our rapprochement with China, I felt we could have done better by Taiwan, but by the time of the Carter Administration I was convinced we were doing everything possible for Taiwan short of calling a halt to the entire process with the PRC. I definitely favored going ahead on the terms set out during the Brzezinski visit, and I am convinced the ambiguity of the agreement with the PRC concerning Taiwan security was the best we could do. In other words, I have no apologies.

Second, far less important and somewhat contradictory to what I have just said, I feel we might have done slightly better by Congress and Taiwan in the very final phase. Despite the dangers, it was a mistake not to keep the Congress better informed. The backlash was Congress's revision of the Taiwan Relations Act in ways that significantly reduced our flexibility. Similarly, Taiwan deserved more notice than it was given, and I suspect we could have adopted slightly more favorable arrangements for practical contact with Taiwan, obviating some of our later troubles with visitors from Taiwan. We might have been able to get away with the practices of Singapore and other Southeast Asian countries. Be that as it may, when Christopher went to Taipei to work out the final arrangements for the future, the Taiwanese really took after him - they were very nasty. I understood their ire, and, if I had been a Taiwanese, I would probably have done the same. I am not suggesting that the outcome would necessarily have been better if I had remained in the DAS position in Washington, but I think I would have opposed some of the self-depriving provisions that were finally adopted by persons less sensitive to Taiwan than I.

Now let me turn to Korea. I would like to add a few more details about troop withdrawals to the account contained in my book published by Brookings. I found Phil Habib, by this time the under secretary for political affairs and the most senior foreign service officer, somewhat more ambivalent about Carter's troop withdrawal proposal than I. Both of us were opposed to troop withdrawals in the radical terms postulated by Governor Carter during the election campaign, but Phil seemed more inclined towards an "arm's length" relationship with the ROK than I was. Of course, he had long experience with Korean matters - including service in Korea just after Park's coup in 1961 and again when Park promulgated the Yushin Constitution in 1972. Like me in later years, these events forced him to wrestle with the moral issue of maintaining our military presence in the face of political retrogression in Korea. In 1972, he considered doing something with our forces to distance us from Park, although the nearest he came to any practical recommendation was to sign off on messages from his political section that talked of basing of the 2nd Division further to the south and removing US forces from the Panmunjom area. These recommendations didn't make sense to me at the time or later.

After Carter tried to bully the bureaucracy into implementing his withdrawal plans in 1977, I occasionally wondered why Phil didn't exploit his great prestige to tell Vance that if Carter persisted with his Korea policy, he would need to find another under secretary. The most obvious instance was the day we received instructions from the White House through Vance and Phil not to consider the wisdom of Carter plans, only the modalities for carrying it out. This diktat violated a most basic concept about policy making in our country. Someone should have challenged the White House, but Vance and Habib were team players, not Singlaub. So, I must admit, was I. Perhaps the unheroic tactics we chose were the best way to handle Carter.

The issue of troop withdrawals attracted all sorts of attention. Military opinion ranged from views similar to mine - major withdrawals "never," but consideration of small withdrawals "maybe" - to Jack Singlaub, who was speaking for the majority in the military. On the civilian side, there were a few people who were fervent supporters of the president - although most would not have gone as far he did on this issue - to those who were strongly opposed to any change in the status quo. When these various factions were brought together in meetings, there couldn't be a meeting of minds; instead, there was a kind of paralysis.

Producing an acceptable intelligence annex for NSM 13, the bureaucracy's study of the issue, was probably the messiest process in which I ever participated. What was the balance of power between South and North Korea? We argued endlessly in search of an accurate formulation, but the result was fuzzy and the process was exasperating. To be sure, intelligence assessments are cumbersome affairs. Many agencies and many parts of agencies are involved; by the time the assessment is completed, everyone is worn out and tends to sign off on a draft that fuzzes over differences; the process takes forever; and if there is an externally dictated time limitation - as there was with the troop withdrawal issue, the process is more strained than usual. In this instance, we were faced with a reinterpretation of aerial photography by more, and more skilled, analysts whose findings provided a graver view of the imbalance between North and South. This surprised many people, including me, but I accepted it. However, there were others who voiced suspicion, and there were organizational jealousies. Even among the military, there were differences. All of this vastly complicated the process. The best we could do at the early stage of debate was to agree on a range of estimates on the North's military strength.

Further complicating matters, the officers responsible for drafting this challenging document were not up to it and fell on their faces much to my embarrassment. I brought in a number of people from other parts of the government to help. Evelyn Colbert was a key one, and she gradually brought the intelligence annex to a workable compromise that could be understood by non-specialist consumers. For the NSM itself I was able to pull Bob Rich away from a Caribbean post to help us on an emergency basis, and he quickly helped bring order out of chaos.

Producing NSM 13 was not tidy. The intellectual integrity of the policy making process had been called into question; there was a cacophony of noisy opinions; the subject was very complicated; and some of the participants were not sufficiently adroit when we got to the stage of formulating options for the NSC. My reaction at this critical stage was probably the consensus view: given the politics of the situation, I felt it was important that we offer something to the president - at least the crumbs that we included in our least damaging option. We worked hard to devise a package that we thought should satisfy the president, in form, and us, in practice. We did quite well, arriving at a consensus with almost all key people in the establishment lined up to support us.

Unfortunately, the president, with unexpected help from Brzezinski, overrode recommendations that were strongly supported by Vance and Brown. We cursed Brzezinski for helping Carter shoot down our clever effort, yet I must admit the NSC advisor later played a basically cooperative part. When we met with him at the White House to discuss subsequent policy issues and the modalities of the Brown-Habib consultations in Seoul, I thought Brzezinski was pretty reasonable. On at least two other occasions he pushed Carter to moderate his position, but not in the car with me in Seoul in 1979!

Let me now turn to Japan. As I have indicated, I thought we neglected our relationship with Japan during the Kissinger era. In the Carter administration, there was an opportunity to change course. Habib and Holbrooke agreed with me, and I made this point strongly to Vance. Granting that the Japanese were sometimes difficult to deal with because of cross-cultural communications, I argued we had to try harder with a key ally in Asia, and we did. The Japanese got much better access to the government's high ranking officials. Secretary Vance treated them with the dignity and respect that they deserved - like the Europeans, Soviets and Chinese. Both Vance and Harold Brown recognized Japan as an important country, and the Japanese noticed the change.

By early 1978, the economic-trade issues that had been quite contentious in the past, began to roil the water again. Robert Straus, Carter's Special Trade Representative, led a delegation to Tokyo. There was some tension with the Japanese over this highly political problem, but not as serious as a few years later. It helped that the President paid a State visit to Japan in 1979 in connection with the G-7 meeting and his trip to Korea. Many Cabinet officers visited Japan helping to clear the air. There were reciprocal visits of course to Washington. Prime Minister Fukuda came in 1978; he was treated very well. It should be noted that the term "treated well" has to be understood within the context of Carter predilections - e.g. water, not wine, for lunch.

A big issue between us and the Japanese was the Japanese desire to build a nuclear reprocessing plant to serve them and perhaps much of Asia. We opposed the idea in light of our non-proliferation policy and concern over potential misuse of the plutonium that would be produced. At the time I thought I was pretty knowledgeable about this highly technical issue, but I have learned since that I didn't know nearly as much as I thought. I considered it highly unlikely that the Japanese would be tempted to develop a nuclear weapon and that reprocessing to obtain fuel for light water and breeder reactors might be sensible. We had agreed to let the Germans build a reprocessing plant, and all the nuclear powers had them. I didn't see any reason why we should treat Japan differently from Germany. I managed to convince Holbrooke, and he became even more zealous than I. Mike Mansfield, who was about to leave to take up his ambassadorial reins in Tokyo, was also eager to help the Japanese. On the other side were the non-proliferation advocates, such as Jessica Mathews at the NSC and people in ACDA.

If I had known then what I know today about the problems of reprocessing, we might have been wiser to discourage the Japanese from reprocessing and developing a breeder reactor. But there would have been a real cost of Japanese resentment. In shifting our policy we effectively weakened the non-proliferation regime, stimulated concerns elsewhere in Asia, and let the Japanese wander down a dangerous garden path. I should emphasize that the Japanese did not disappoint us on our assumptions about their safeguards; they have done a superb job on that score.

The battle over reprocessing was hard fought. I remember that Holbrooke and I gave Mansfield a very detailed briefing on this subject. We asked that when he got to Tokyo, he weigh in with his views - often and loudly. Mansfield did that effectively, and the president finally concurred.

Another issue was our military supply policy. We had one policy for NATO members and another for some non-NATO countries, like Australia and New Zealand, which was a "lighter" version of the NATO policy. I thought Japan should be included in the "light" group, and this was finally approved. Korea was sui generis, because of its military relationship with us, including a joint command.

At the time, I thought that Japan was in the process of becoming a major world power. It had developed an impressive economy, and it was engaged throughout Asia. Increasingly, relations with Japan were an important factor in our policy toward the PRC and Korean peninsula. Together with China's re-emergence, this was one the major transformations taking place in Asia, and it was accompanied by latent Japanese nationalism, which could prove dangerous if not handled properly.

These considerations helped prompt the Carter administration to raise Japan's priority, to a level at least co-equal with the PRC. Understandably, there was always some wariness. Although we considered Japan a most important ally, we certainly did not wish to see the Japanese exercise hegemony in the area, if for no other reason than that every other Asian country would rise in strong opposition, particularly China and Korea. Japan's national security preoccupied us in other ways as well. For example, we devoted a lot of time to the question of the appropriate level of Japan's defense expenditures. We argued that the existing level was quite inadequate and claimed that it forced us to compensate with higher levels of our own expenditure than we believed to be fair. Personally, I was ambivalent about this effort. The debate, which started while I was still in Washington, reached its apex during my first year in Seoul. 1979 was a critical year when we pushed our views pretty shamelessly in both Japan and Korea.

As sort of a wrap up to my tour as DAS, I might point out that in the Carter administration we tried to operate with an overarching policy for East Asia that was broader than Kissinger's China-focused view and his tendency to treat Japan and Korea as afterthoughts in geopolitical terms. In the Carter period there was a basic assumption that a successful US relationship with any East Asian country required a sound relationship with Japan as well as China. If not handled adroitly, our displays of intimacy toward either of these countries tended to cause a backlash in the other. Much the same could be said about Korea. All three countries wished to be treated as important powers in their own right and wanted equal treatment from the US. Thus at times we needed to tell the PRC that our policy and military presence in Japan were a form of insurance against ultra-nationalist tendencies that might arise. In Japan, we needed to point out that we were protecting the region's stability by balancing the power of the PRC - and the USSR. With the Koreans, we always needed to make both arguments. This balancing act was, and today remains, a key aspect of a successful North East Asia policy.

I might also note that in the Carter administration there was an increasing emphasis on regional economic relationships. Although these have since become a predominant feature of economics in the East Asian area, the outline of this development was becoming clear even in the late 1970s. By the time I got to Korea, for example, there was already unpublicized trade between the ROK and the PRC, growing rapidly and accepted by both sides even though not yet legal. I always hoped that closer economic relationships would be a stabilizing factor in the area. Japan, which was headed for economic super power status, seemed poised to help the region in a big way. It was admired as a model for economic development by other Asians who ignored the warts and faults of the system - e.g. the over-regulation and closed markets that have hobbled it in recent years. The PRC, on the other hand, had not begun to throw off the shackles of a centrally dominated command economy.

A third goal of the administration was to sustain an atmosphere that allowed us comfortable and acceptable military relationships, particularly with our Japanese and Korean allies. This led us to hope that Japan and Korea would get along militarily with China. There were even a few dreamers who hoped for some kind of formal tripartite military relationship, which was not in the cards then or now. But, as I suggested before, the balance that we sought in our political relationships was crucial when dealing with military issues.

I should have mentioned the Carter administration's human rights policy at the beginning of my remarks, since they were woven through so much of our work during my second tour in the East Asian Bureau. I was EAP's normal liaison with the Department's new Bureau of Human Rights under Pat Derian. Much of the work was done by our country directors and their staffs working with counterparts in HR, but if front office help was required, they came to me, and I would contact Derian's deputies or Derian herself. Although he was prepared to reinforce me if necessary, Holbrooke, happily delegated this function to me just as Vance delegated the responsibility to Warren Christopher, the Deputy Secretary. If there was an important meeting, Holbrooke for sure and sometimes even Vance would attend. The Under Secretary for Political Affairs, initially Habib and later David Newsom, was deeply involved, especially if the issue affected more than one region, but effectively most decisions were made by Christopher. The human rights burden was a very heavy load for him.

I frequently faced Christopher and Derian together, Derian as the prosecutor, Christopher as her sympathetic judge, and I as the defense attorney for the offending Asian countries. In some of these situations I could have used more help from Vance and Holbrooke. East Asia was by no means the only area of concern to our human rights activists. Most of Africa and the Communist world was off limits for a variety of reasons. The Middle East as well as Central and South America got their share of attention, but East Asia seemed to have a special fascination. In part because of the international church network, Korea's sins, for example, were a steady target. Derian also focused on the Philippines, Taiwan, and Indonesia. The PRC was exempted, largely because of our normalization effort but also because the prospect for human rights progress in China was close to zero.

I am sure that the easy access and considerable influence we enjoyed in East Asia were subconsciously responsible for HR's special attraction to East Asian targets. These were countries where we in the habit of frequent intervention and could hope for some success in contrast to so much of the rest of the world. The irony was that these were also countries where the populations were already benefitting from great improvements in their economic and social situation, even in some political areas. I had a hard time getting this point across. Double standards didn't get in Derian's way.

I fully understood that fostering human rights was an important objective of US foreign policy, given the nature of our society and ideology which put such a premium on democratic practice and individual liberties. Yet I did not consider human rights abroad to be a vital US interest compared with war, peace, or economic well-being. Human rights objectives frequently clashed with other important goals, and they tended to reflect American views far more than the values of the poor souls we were trying to help. Our objectives and priorities were highly America-centric. A large portion of our human rights community got its training from our civil rights movement; few had experience abroad.

In any event, our Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs had the responsibility for balancing human rights goals against other US objectives. East Asia posed a number of difficult choices in the late 1970s: Marcos was a very bad actor and inevitable target for the Human Rights Bureau, but we were also trying to deal with tricky base matters. Park Chung Hee was trampling all over the place in Korea, but he was also ruling a nation of critical importance to East Asian security. Chiang Ching-kuo's control apparatus in Taiwan had an ugly style, but we were about to pull the rug from under Taiwan by recognizing the PRC. Suharto was an autocrat, but he also holding together a nation of strategic importance, etc. Human rights proponents tended to ignore the total picture and often proposed using strong leverage against the perpetrators of abuse with little attention to the consequences for other interests.

Since I was born in Asia and had served and traveled widely there, I thought I had some understanding of levels of economic and social development as well as the cultural factors that governed Asian values and priorities. These were often quite different from ours, although rapid development has by now narrowed the differences that existed twenty years ago. Asians tended to focus on groups; we tended to focus on individuals. Asians, because they had a long way to go before reaching Western standards of living, wanted to catch up as quickly as possible, even at some cost to political goals and individual rights.

I tried hard to convey some understanding of this mentality to my colleagues in the human rights area. Sometimes, I succeeded; mostly I failed. It was less like a battle than going through a grinder. There were no senior people in the Human Rights Bureau with Asian experience. They were really quite ignorant, unaware, for example, that Park Chung Hee was close to his people and had done an outstanding job of satisfying their most urgent needs for economic security, social mobility, and education. Much the same could be said about Chiang Ching-kuo and to some extent about Suharto in early days.

Christopher clearly did not understand the points I have just been making. I couldn't get through to him. Even years later, relaxing over lunch in New York when we were both out of the government, the bias was still there. Pat Derian approached the issue the same confrontational way she had tackled civil rights in this country. Despite my frustrated efforts at education, I think I was a good counter weight in policy discussions. Few problems were solved, but our relations with other countries were not irreparably damaged.

Most of our disagreements dealt with tactics. I was not a defender of the human rights abusers. I shared Derian's and Christopher's distaste for ugly developments in East Asia, and I was in favor of telling Park, Marcos, Chiang, and Suharto what we thought of these dark blemishes. In fact, I could never bring myself to defend Marcos in any respect, but with the other dictators I could safely say that although their human rights policies left much to be desired, they had done a lot for their people. You can see that the issue of human rights "grabbed me."

Holbrooke handled most of the Congressional liaison work for the bureau, including giving testimony. He liked it and was much better at it than I. He was a very good witness. I did testify when I was acting assistant secretary, but most often I talked to members and staffers in less formal ways. I met with all of the members of the subcommittees both in the House and the Senate, usually after Holbrooke had paved the way. I worked with the members individually and in groups. The senators had an Asian discussion group which I was asked to join on several evenings. We talked about normalization with the PRC, Korea and Japan. All of this took a significant amount of my time, but I must say that Holbrooke's contribution was far more important. Relating to politicians was Dick's forte; he was superb at it and loved it.

Somewhat arbitrarily, this maybe a good point to slide in a few words about a time consuming aspect of our work with Congress, in Washington but more so overseas. The subject is Congressional Delegations traveling abroad or what we called CODELS. I began briefing CODELs during my first tour in Taiwan; I became much more involved while serving in Tokyo, since informally I reported to the ambassador and the DCM who were responsible for such things. I have already mentioned that I was the CODEL escort officer for the delegation that came to Japan for Ikeda's inauguration, and I must have served with five or even ten CODELs concerned with Japan's foreign relations. Incidentally, no CODEL while I was in Japan was as burdensome for us in the embassy as was Bobby Kennedy's non-CODEL visit, because he saw himself as a surrogate for the president and wanted summit treatment. In Hong Kong, we had lots of CODELs most of which wished to be briefed on the PRC. Of course Hong Kong was a major attraction, given the ample supply of good restaurants and shopping places. The flow never stopped during the visiting season; one CODEL would leave followed almost immediately by another.

After Hong Kong, in the late 1960s I served in Washington in UN/P (then an office within IO). There I inherited from Bill Buffum, a deputy to Joe Sisco, the job of accompanying US Congressional delegations to the Inter-Parliamentary Union meetings in various lovely watering spots around the world. I made many trips during a couple of years; I saw CODELs from the inside. Of course, we had many CODELs in Taiwan when I was the DCM and in charge. Then in Korea, we had a stream of important Congressional visitors. So during my career, I had more than enough experience with CODELs.

The value of CODELs was always a matter of controversy. My own judgment was that if some or most of the congressmen and senators in the group listened and absorbed, then that particular CODEL was probably justified. However, the cost of CODELs was very high because of all the support they required - first class travel for themselves and numerous staff aides, often on special aircraft, and, of course, huge amounts of time from the Department and even more from its posts. Embassies were often stretched very thin by such visits, and CODELs came at the cost of leaving regular work untouched for periods of time. Those negative aspects often outweighed the positive. If Congressional members had traveled individually or in smaller groups with just one assistant, that would have been a great help. CODELs, particularly large ones, tended to have some members who had special agendas, such as striking personal deals with local businessmen and officials or doing favors for constituents. These members might have little interest in being briefed on policy and substantive discussions, and their inclusion in delegations wasted a lot of time and sometimes resulted in embarrassing situations. In general, I felt that if the Congress had operated in a slightly lower key when traveling, its members would have learned more and caused less disruption. On a cost/benefit ratio, CODELs left something to be desired. Of course, there was - and is - no way of stopping them.

My job in EA included supervision of the bureau's administrative efforts, including assignments, efficiency reports, etc. We had an unusual operation because of Holbrooke's predilections. He took considerable interest and exercised considerable influence when he wanted to. But since he had a full plate all the time, there were many decisions that he left to me and the staff. For the most part we complemented each other on both substantive and administrative issues. Inevitably, I took care of matters that were boring for him. I did the follow-through, the paper writing, etc. On personnel, Dick did very well at identifying good young officers as well as bringing new blood into the bureau. I sometimes had to pick up the pieces, for example, when newcomers blocked the advancement opportunities for other officers.

I considered the system for choosing ambassadors highly ineffective. As in all administrations, there were far too many political appointees, some exceptionally incompetent. Vance was very proud of the ambassadorial selection committee that was established to review all candidates for ambassadorial appointments. My impression was different. Even if some poor candidates were screened out, quite a few were approved for appointment. Apart from being burdened with incompetents, I felt that we should have as many career officers as possible serving in our area, and I vigorously propagandized that view. Our use of ambassadorships as political rewards is almost unique in the world. It is insane. I would give Carter's ambassadorial appointment system a failing grade. Although I sensed that the caliber of senior officers was beginning to deteriorate, the career personnel system had produced many good ambassadors and DCMs as well as candidates. There was no shortage of either during my EA tour. We did have problems with the aftermath of the Kissinger regime (GLOP), because from those days on, management was interested in broadening the area experience of officers. We got some good people from other regional bureaus that way, but sometimes the Office of Personnel pushed us too hard.

The system showed some real weaknesses when it came to country director assignments. We could not find enough good officers at the right grade level with necessary experience to fill those jobs. As I pointed out earlier in my comments on troop withdrawals from Korea, I had a terribly hard time before finally extracting a former colleague, Bob Rich, from a leisurely assignment in the Caribbean. This shortage opened the opportunity for Holbrooke to move people up the ladder, some of them too quickly, but mostly with good results. At root, however, the Department's personnel system wasn't developing enough good people for senior positions. The China and Japan country directorates, both large, were probably the most strongly staffed, but they both suffered from the inbreeding that comes with difficult language training. The others ranged from good to fair. Korea was spotty, because it was not big enough in those days to be a specialty, and was staffed by overflow from Japan, China, and anywhere. Throughout the bureau, younger officers struck me as the most promising element.

Having been a specialist myself, I must acknowledge a frustrating problem with specialization. To function well, both posts and home offices require substantial numbers of well trained and experienced specialists, and the system must be run to bring these people into their full potential. Yet the same system requires that those same posts and offices also make use of other people generally qualified for foreign service, especially those in other specialties who seek broadening experience and recruits who must be tested before a commitment to extended training. If China and Japan officers were left entirely to their own predilections, they would probably form exclusive clubs, cutting out outsiders and tending to isolate themselves from the stimulus of things not Chinese or Japanese. They might not be bothered by this insularity in their early years, but they would fall short of expectations in senior positions where versatility is required. I must confess that it was easier to diagnose the problem than to design a system that coped effectively with it. I sympathized with those in administration who struggled hard to make it work.

All in all I think Holbrooke and I were about as well served as our predecessors in terms of the overall quality of the Foreign Service officers. We had a lot of good people. I did encounter some mediocrity, but the system has always had quite a bit of it. I worked hard on personnel issues. Fortunately, it was mostly a seasonal work-load because of the summer assignment and reporting cycles. I had tons of efficiency reports to write and review. That was a real work load, since each rated officer wanted to have some time with me to discuss his or her efficiency report. I took this task seriously, because the product was the basic document for promotion panels.

Holbrooke's style on co-ordination with others was very much group oriented. He felt that many heads were better than one and that by discussing issues in a group he would get both consensus and some enthusiasm for implementation. He approached inter-agency relationships as he did the Congress, getting to know key figures in other agencies. He cultivated all potential sources of influence, and with a few exceptions, even Brzezinski most of the time, he tried to avoid unnecessary tensions. He spent a lot of time on this. Dick and I worked out a division of labor, based mostly on our instincts about the situation and problem to be resolved. Many of Dick's contacts were institutionally inclined to be helpful; some were friends of long standing. I think he did an excellent job; he was a real net-worker.

Holbrooke also set up an inter-agency group, which started small and grew as time passed. I don't think it went beyond seven or eight in my time. This new mechanism, which was clearly a Holbrooke creature, was readily accepted by other agencies; it became so effective that people wanted to be invited to join. The group met in Holbrooke's office once a week at a set time with a flexible agenda. A lot of decisions were made there. Mort Abramowitz from ISA in Defense, Mike Armacost from the NSC, and I were among the core members. Mort would often bring his military counterpart - Admiral Crowe, who was exceptionally sensible and cooperative. That got the group accustomed to uniformed personnel at the meetings. Someone from CIA was usually present. Although Dick usually had an agenda in mind for these meetings, they were free-wheeling - but not to the point of inefficiency. The operation was an elemental aspect of Dick's network of well placed friends in the bureaucracy. His "informal group," as it was called, was quickly recognized as an effective tool for policy development. Non-members were frequently invited, for example, Les Gelb, then Director of the P/M Bureau and Tony Lake, then the Director of S/P on the issue of troop withdrawals from Korea. Probably the best way to describe this process is to say that the group met as a small meeting of friends who were influential aides to key NSC members. It was very, very effective. Dick was inventive and creative in this sort of thing. His device to deal with bureaucratic problems served the nation - and, to be sure, his own career.

I might mention one other management innovation that Dick brought to EAP. Unlike my other superiors, he encouraged me to establish a relationship with Vance and Christopher. I already had some ties to the Secretary, but our relationship deepened with Holbrooke's encouragement. If we were trying to see the Secretary on an important issue, Dick would almost always take me with him. After we had worked together for a time, he obviously trusted me to the point that he was not bothered when, for some reason, I happened to see the secretary alone. He knew that I would say and do the right things. I was lucky that we saw issues eye-to-eye. Those who crossed Holbrooke regretted it for a long time.

I stayed in the bureau for about 18 months. I was getting worn out by the end. My work-load was very heavy. I used to leave home before seven and get back at 8:30-9:00 p.m. almost every night, plus long Saturdays and sometimes even Sundays. It was very hard on family life, and undoubtedly a factor in my former wife's decision to leave me in Seoul.

Q: I think that brings us now to 1978 and your appointment as Ambassador to the Republic of Korea. I recognize that you have covered this period your book on some of your experiences there and I will try not to duplicate that. Tell us first of all, how the appointment came about?

GLEYSTEEEN: I was in a good position to know about upcoming ambassadorial vacancies. I knew what the Ambassadorial Committee was up to, and Holbrooke, who was well informed, almost always took me into his confidence on these matters. He relished his involvement in ambassadorial appointments - a kind of patronage device even within the career service. As I recall, he raised the possibility of my replacing Dick Sneider in Korea well before Dick had announced his plans. I was one part of a program involving quite a few ambassadorial moves. Holbrooke talked to Vance about these, and with some exceptions the plan was carried out.

I should remind you in this connection that Holbrooke's his first inclination was to "clean house." He wanted to control the bureau's activities and therefore wanted to have his own people in key positions. He had some ideas about who should go to the PRC, Korea, etc. Some of these ideas never materialized, because the White House went into high gear politically for some of the EA posts. I don't think either of us knew about Leonard Woodcock who was destined to become our ambassador in Beijing. This took care of one of my anxieties. Mansfield had wanted the China job, and I felt he tended to be too uncritical about the PRC. For those posts that were of relatively little interest to the White House political operations, i.e. uncomfortable ones, dangerous ones, and ones with lots of real work, Holbrooke consulted me about career officers and generally I think he made very good selections.

My nomination was cleared by the White House without any delays. My confirmation hearings went smoothly. I was expecting a difficult time from Senator Helms, but the hearing turned out to be quite jocular and friendly; Helms in effect decided to save his treatment for someone else. As I recall four members of the Foreign Relations Committee were in attendance. The hearings were rather brief and very superficial.

I arrived in Seoul in June, 1978. I did not get a chance to delve into Korean affairs in great depth before arrival, because I kept working as the senior DAS until the last moment. We had been preoccupied with China in the spring of 1978, and, as I have mentioned, I went with Brzezinski to Beijing in May. Thanks to my colleagues and considerable travel to Korea, I was not really surprised by what I found in Seoul. I knew very well what was on my predecessor's mind; I had stayed in the residence; and I had met President Park Chung Hee when accompanying Secretary of Defense Harold Brown. My most recent visit to Seoul was on our way home from Brzezinski's trip to China. Over a long career I had come to know many of the officers in the embassy. However, as in any assignment, challenge becomes more vivid when you actually arrive at post.

A special challenge was the relationship with the UN Commander - the American four- star general in operational command of all US and most Korean forces. When I arrived, General Jack Vessey, who later became the chairman of the joint chiefs, was in charge. He was well respected by the Koreans, as he should have been. Although I had given much thought to how best to manage the relationship, I still found that the process required time and effort. I had seen the CINC-ambassador relationship when Stilwell was the commander and Sneider was the ambassador. Relations between the two were strained. From my Washington vantage point, I thought that Sneider had been energetic in his efforts to make the relationship work, but Stilwell was an unusually difficult man - very full of himself. He knew he was very important to the Koreans, because "he" provided security and military assistance to them - not to mention use of the Command's golf course and clubs. The embassy, on the other hand, was usually the source of complaints and problems for the ROK.

Besides personality clashes, the tensions between what I have termed "proud ambassadors and powerful CINCs" reflected a range of institutional conflicts that could easily focus on the leaders of the two institutions. In the command's case, it had manpower and resources, which made it a key player in ROK affairs. The ambassador had few, if any, goodies to hand out; in the 1970s and 1980s he was almost always the bearer of bad news. The ambassador was supposed to be in charge of everything except operational military matters. Many military officers had trouble with this mandate.

I must say that I was prepared for considerably more difficulty than I actually had. I was pleasantly surprised by Vessey, who was a gentleman and tried his best to work closely with Dick Sneider and then me. He never challenged or undermined my authority, which was crucial since he had direct access to President Park Chung Hee on command matters. Vessey stuck to his military agenda, keeping out of my business as much as possible. For example, he behaved very modestly when Carter visited Korea, essentially limiting himself to a strong pitch against any further withdrawal of our troops.

Vessey was succeeded by John Wickham. This time I was the "old timer," which helped, but Wickham was also a remarkably cooperative officer, respected for his military skills and savvy about the political scene. Wickham and I went through a period of political tumult and tension that required maximum coordination between the embassy and the UN Command. We both worked hard to get along, and I think our relationship was close to ideal. Both Vessey and Wickham were exceptional officers. Neither abused the CINC position for ego satisfaction. I did my best to reciprocate their cooperation.

Another of my concerns on arrival was Koreagate, which was quite a preoccupation in those days involving, on the one hand, Korean and American venality of a disgusting sort, and, on the other, counter tactics by the Justice Department that sometimes bordered on what I would term "un-American practice." Ben Civiletti, the deputy attorney general and basically a very civilized man, was pushed by Congress into using American law and standards in pursuit of foreign officials, who while apparently guilty, were, nevertheless, protected by diplomatic immunity.

The origins of Koreagate were simple and one could have some sympathy for President Park's objective though not his means. Alarmed by the way we were extracting ourselves from our Vietnam commitment, Park apparently decided to try to "buy" a more favorable U.S. policy toward Korea by bribing members of Congress and the administration. Allegedly, significant amounts of money passed hands, and Kim Dong Jo, Korea's ambassador at the time, was presumed to be at least aware of the Korean CIA's activities, even though the actual payments were made by agents and rascals such as the notorious Tongsun Park. Other circumstances added to the American sense of outrage. The Korean regime had lurched to the right with the highly authoritarian Yushin constitution that Park imposed in 1972, and in 1973 Korean CIA agents had kidnaped the opposition leader, Kim Dae Jung, from a Tokyo hotel room and almost killed him. The U.S. media and Congress pounced on Korea for these actions. This was the environment when the Koreagate scandal splashed into public knowledge during the 1976 U.S. election campaign. Korea became a political pariah, almost obscuring its earlier image as an economic tiger.

If the tumult in Washington had been limited to outrage over the alleged pay-offs, it might have died down sooner, either through neglect or prosecution of the guilty. But a significant minority in Congress, mostly Democrats in both houses, was already bashing Korea, condemning Park Chung Hee for human right abuses and questioning the wisdom of our security commitment. Their views reflected what they heard from American missionaries and the network of anti-Park dissidents. In addition to thunder from these people, there was a tendency in Congress to keep the finger pointed at Korea so as to deflect attention from the Americans with dirty hands.

The administration faced a tricky situation. Elements of a divided Congress were being exceedingly demanding and uncooperative. Yet, given Korea's sovereign rights, there was really no effective way we could get to the heart of the matter. We could only do our best to pursue the alleged culprits on their home turf in Korea. The first stage of this, the interrogation of Tongsun Park, supposedly a private Korean citizen and not a government agent, had already taken place by the time I arrived in Seoul, and it was less than a success. After cross examining Tongsun Park in Seoul, Civiletti then wanted evidence from Ambassador Kim. The Korean Government was shielding him.

While wanting to be helpful, the State Department and embassy Seoul had serious reservations about Civiletti's effort. On the one hand, we had little doubt that the Koreans were guilty as charged. Their behavior was most reprehensible. On the other hand, we needed the cooperation of the Korean government to obtain evidence for prosecution of the Americans involved, and if such cooperation was not forthcoming, there wasn't much we could do about it. We could have threatened punitive actions against Korea, but our demands on Korea exceeded the norms of the international system. If, for example, the Koreans had asked us for permission to interrogate U.S. officials in the U.S., we would have turned them down flatly. In fact, ten years later when the Korean National Assembly subpoenaed General Wickham and me to talk about Kwangju, the State Department rejected the request - while, to be sure, offering to be fully cooperative in other ways.

Pressuring us to do the impermissible was Leon Jaworski, counsel for the main congressional investigating committee and a man famous for not letting anything get in his way. The result was enormous amounts of talk and demagogic threat from the congress forcing the administration to do things that were unlikely to be productive. We tried to figure out a minimum level of interference that we might request of the Koreans, providing Civiletti with the necessary information without doing irreparable damage to US-ROK relations. I think Civiletti understood our problem. As deputy attorney general, he was he was faced with bipartisan congressional demands for drastic action. Yet he was too smart not to recognize that nothing we could do could be very successful. He was quite proper in his relations with the Koreans; he certainly behaved far better than some of his Justice and FBI colleagues, not to mention the Congress.

When I left Washington for Seoul in June 1978, Congressional committees were still trying to subpoena former Ambassador Kim Dong Jo. On arrival in Seoul, I was handed a telegram at the airport instructing me to see President Park and convey the latest demands of Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill. Since I had not yet presented my credentials to President Park, I had to settle for the foreign minister and the secretary general of the Blue House. I had no doubt that Park got a full run-down and made the decisions. O'Neill was requesting, really demanding, that Park receive two House members as the Speaker's emissaries and be given access to Tongsun Park and Kim Dong Jo. The Koreans were reluctant to deny the request, yet determined to deflect it. We finally reached a compromise: no emissaries, but willingness of Ambassador Kim to respond in writing to questions submitted. Kim's responses proved close to worthless.

I came to believe that the only solution to Koreagate was to let it grind down. Also I had been told by perceptive observers that the congressional elections of 1978 would have a mitigating effect, as indeed they did almost overnight. During the entire process I was never informed authoritatively about the grand jury findings so I don't know how many Congressmen were really suspected of accepting bribes. As I recall, only one, Congressman Hannah, was actually prosecuted and a few others slid out of the way by quietly retiring from office.

Not long after I got to Seoul - probably in early October - I was called back to Washington to testify before the House Ethics Committee on Koreagate. The chairman of the committee was Lee Hamilton. The committee met me in executive session - limited to members only, no staff and no record. I was the only one present who was not a member of the committee. The session lasted about three hours. Members were not personally unfriendly; they treated me quite courteously. In fact, this was the beginning of a long and good relationship with Hamilton. At the end of the hearing, the chairman asked me to return the next day to see him and perhaps one or two others. That I did; I saw Hamilton alone for about an hour and then he invited the ranking Republican member of the committee to join us. I found the committee to be quite responsible. I was able to be very frank with them. Most of the members were understanding, if not entirely sympathetic. It was during these sessions that I was told the affair would probably die out after the elections.

The Korean leadership never publicly admitted any involvement nor did it express any regret. The foreign minister, came close to it in our private conversations, but the government did nothing. President Park was stubborn. He undoubtedly looked at the misdeeds as a Korean would; i.e. honorably motivated acts conducted in a style that was routine in Korea's political culture. He greatly resented the attacks levied on him in the U.S. Congress. He viewed American claims of innocence cynically. Whatever exonerating concerns there might have been, the president's behavior was only one of many signs that he had been in power too long and was out of touch with realities. At the beginning of his regime in 1961, Park recognized the need to civilianize his government. He did that, and the government functioned very well for a number of years. Later he became paranoid about potential threats to his regime - particularly after his wife's assassination - and he adopted an increasingly autocratic style. By the time I arrived in Seoul he was quite insulated; he depended almost exclusively on the KCIA and information from his other special organizations such as the presidential protective force and Defense Security Command. History has shown that this was a very dangerous way to govern.

Let me turn to management of the embassy. I never considered myself a whiz at management, but I had some confidence in my style after having it tested in supervisory positions both in Washington and the field. Some of my experience had involved special challenges, e.g. the China analysis operation in Hong Kong, INR with its personnel difficulties, and Taipei with the problem of interagency coordination and supervision, not to mention changing policies. I had some sense of how the activities of an embassy should be integrated. I had seen a lot of bad examples that I was determined not to follow. I was sensitive to situations that needed improvement, and I knew when the engine needed a tune-up, even if I couldn't do it myself. My main goal was to make the embassy as good and as internally coherent as possible.

I was a stickler for the sharing of information - a principle that I was occasionally forced to violate under orders from Washington - so that all appropriate officers knew what was going on. I had seen several instances in which the political and economic sections were barely on speaking terms. I wanted a collegiate, well informed staff. I also believed in delegating responsibility as it had been delegated to me in Taipei and Washington. I thought the DCM should be managing as much as he or she could and that section chiefs should be responsible for much of the workload. As for ambassadorial models, my objective was to follow the style of some excellent leaders with whom I had worked. I knew that an ambassador could not be effective unless he had his or her bureau in Washington's full support. The reverse was also true. There is a premium on close relationships between an ambassador and his main associates in the Department of State.

I was quite satisfied with the support I got from the Department. I felt I was given special treatment. The secretary and Holbrooke trusted me; the deputy secretary tolerated me - conceivably he may have liked me. From my EA experience, I knew most of the Department's senior officials. Even after I left Washington, my relationships with them helped in getting approvals for various things as well as access during my frequent returns for consultations. Since the bureau recognized my interest in several EA countries, I was provided information that normally would not have been sent to our embassy in Seoul. I have absolutely no complaints about the support I received from Washington.

Although I was determined to share as much information as I could with the senior staff, I had some problems after President Park's assassination. Washington began to restrict information quite severely, complicating our efforts in Seoul, but I think I showed my DCM virtually everything and the appropriate section chiefs most things. I did so even when told not to, sometimes resorting to letting them read but not keep messages or telling them the gist. I followed the same procedures with the station chief and the CINC. It was vital that key persons know what was going on if they were to provide advice or carry on in my absence. Generally, I kept Holbrooke and Rich informed about how I was sharing information. Sometimes I violated the rules, but we had an excellent record for keeping secrets in Seoul.

A few months after the assassination, there was a rebellion in Washington against the over-rigid rules for information sharing (or non-sharing), and the Department agreed to appoint two senior FSOs - John Holdridge being one - to review the entire file and recommend what information could be given wider dissemination - within the Department and to agencies as well. With good reason people in CIA felt that they had been cut off from important information. I think that we were far too restrictive about Korean developments as well as the process of normalization with China.

I was determined to have effective relations with other agencies, probably more so than most ambassadors. I wanted to be sure that the U.S. military and CIA followed US policy without putting their own spin on issues in ways that might cause problems in Washington or Seoul. Previous experience had made me very sensitive to the problem. Fortunately, the leaders of both the military and the intelligence components in Seoul were exceptionally cooperative. I have already mentioned Generals Vessey and Wickham. Bob Brewster, the station chief, was equally cooperative. At my request he initially gave me a very thorough briefing of all of covert and overt activities and then kept me fully informed, often seeing me several times a day. Although I was bit astounded by some of the station's past activities, I think we struck a good balance of need versus common sense during the critical years of 1979-81. For this kind of inter-agency coordination, it was, of course, essential that the Department support my goal, and Holbrooke did so firmly.

Management of the Foreign Service was different from inter-agency coordination. An ambassador has to use a variety of techniques for this. There's an art to doing it well. Some ambassadors are very good at it, some are not. I would rate myself as okay. I should note that I was generally satisfied with the staff I had inherited from Sneider. In fact, it was more capable, certainly at senior levels, than I had anticipated; better than those I had encountered in many other places. I had no interest in cleaning house. Of course, there were some officers who were not as strong as I would have liked, but that is true in all institutions. In general, I found the embassy well run, and this efficiency became especially important following Park's assassination. Without a very good staff, we would have been in serious difficulty.

From my experience in Taiwan, I was aware of the possibility of fraud in the consular and administrative sections, sections which handled money. So I kept an eye on both of those operations. There was no way an ambassador, DCM or section chief could be alerted to fraud unless there were periodic audits of the activities of all employees who handled cash and documents provided to the public. When GAO or other auditors visited, I welcomed their efforts as salutary. I would ask them specifically to look at our cash receipt and disbursement operations. Unfortunately, some consular malfeasance did occur on my watch. A number of visa fraud cases traced to members of the local staff were brought to my attention while I was ambassador; there was a serious problem involving an American employee in AID that I learned about several years after leaving Seoul; and USIA had an employee married to a Korean woman who received benefits that aroused our suspicions. We investigated this couple only to find that what we knew was only the tip of the iceberg. Needless to say, the American employee was transferred out and ultimately fired.

My book is primarily about events leading up to Park's assassination and its aftermath. It touches only tangentially on economic matters, so let me expand a little on US-Korean economic relationships. In the 1970s, Korea had enjoyed rapid growth and international acclaim as a model for developing countries, but by the end of the decade this dazzling performance was fading. The rate of growth was falling, workers were restive, and Korea's development scheme was in some trouble. Inflation was beginning to get out of control, and in 1980 the Koreans found themselves in a significant recession.

To some extent this setback was brought on by excesses stimulated by Park Chung Hee. For example, the huge new defense industrial complex in Changwon was built impulsively without adequate review. Motivated in part by hubris and in part by military security considerations, Park wanted to concentrate much of the ROK's production capability south of Seoul. The new factories, while state of the art and capable of supplying some of Korea's own needs, were not of a scale or managed to compete against highly efficient competitors in the international market. The second oil crisis also had a crippling effect on the Korean economy, which was highly dependent on oil imports. Fuel prices sky-rocketed, causing severe hardships for the population. Fortunately, there was no wide spread unemployment, and both the government and business community were still confident the economic set-backs could be dealt with. This over-all economic situation had serious political consequences, since economic progress had for years softened complaints about Park's harsh rule.

I was familiar with trade complaints, having worked on them while in Washington. I spent a lot of time in Seoul working on textiles, shoes, colored television, electronics, etc.- in almost all cases protecting over-paid American workers from low-cost competition, which left alone would have forced healthy structural changes in the US and brought improved working conditions in Korea. I also supported Westinghouse against the French and Canadians as the Koreans expanded their nuclear power supply. We even managed to get this item on the Carter-Park agenda when they met in 1979. This was a time consuming effort for me and many others on the staff. I didn't get involved very much in the automobile business. In those days, the Korean auto industry was no threat to American manufacturers.

Like our system of quotas, agriculture was another politically sensitive area, especially rice, which was peddled to Korea by a rugged lot of Korean and American agents reinforced by extremely pushy members of Congress. At the beginning of my tour, the problem was rice imported into Korea from heavily subsidized Japanese producers. Later, the problem was a crude American effort to strong-arm Korean consumers. In general, American rice was highly competitive in terms of price, but we had limited amounts of the short grain kind preferred by the Koreans. Rather than let the Koreans turn to Australia and other short grain suppliers, our rice politicians tried to bully the Koreans into buying cheap American long grain varieties. I learned more about rice than I ever wanted to know. I considered our position selfish, and I felt some of the Americans involved, both the businessmen and members of Congress, engaged in extremely highhanded and sometimes illegal behavior. We did quite well on other agricultural sales. The problems of recent years had not yet surfaced.

I did on occasion feel that the pressures we applied to Korea on economic issues might have been a detriment to our political and security goals, for example the pressure to increase defense expenditures in 1979 that were already very high. Usually I was well aware of the pressures on the Department and understood the reasons for my demarches. I am glad to say that Washington never pushed trade issues to the point of jeopardizing the fundamental relationship.

It took Korea many years to restart its economic engine. After the recession in 1980, there was minimal growth in 1981 and not much better performance for several years thereafter, particularly if compared with the 1970s. Then growth resumed at a 5-7% rate.

Korea's recovery and our own recession caused problems after I left in 1981. The Koreans began to accumulate a large current account surplus with the U.S., which made sense for a country that had borrowed so much money from abroad. Disregarding this principle that had benefitted us in the past, we began to treat Korea more and more as a fully developed country like Japan. We pushed hard for rapid financial deregulation, import liberalization, and currency appreciation - all worthy goals, but in Korea's vulnerable condition they struck me as unfair. Compared to Japan, Korea was still at an earlier stage of the development cycle. Furthermore, Japan was a much larger country that had in some respects reached developed status even before the war. The Koreans looked on themselves as a developing country, and we should have treated them that way. There is a parallel in our policy toward the PRC today. In the WTO arguments we may have applied our standards to the PRC prematurely. In both cases we would have been smarter to press first for a decade of serious effort toward bank and regulatory reform as well as progress toward the rule of law.

In any event, I think we have been very self-centered and stingy in comparison to the approach taken after World War II. Then, as the only country that had the resources to assist others, we did so with the Marshall Plan, etc. This enlightened generosity brought enormous benefit to our security and prosperity. I recognize that the world has changed. Much of the wealth is now elsewhere; others need to do their part; and no country should have a free ride to developed status. But the timing of pressures associated with the OECD and, to a lesser extent, the WTO should have been managed more skillfully.

I know these comments reflect my bias. Yet we should keep in mind that our pressures contributed to the recent Asian financial crisis. Of course, the Koreans and other Asians do not have clean hands - e.g. borrowing money far above their repayment capabilities. During my tour in Korea, I felt that the administration had some appreciation for the Korea's economic vulnerability. In the Reagan administration, this diminished.

While I was in Korea, our concerns about Korea's nuclear weapons program had pretty well abated, although we felt that it still had to be carefully monitored. We never found any evidence that the Koreans were restarting their program. Their capacity had not been dismantled; it remained "stood down." But we were concerned by the strides the Koreans were making in a missile development program that was in high gear. I worried about this, because I was concerned that if the ROK were able to build a reliable missile force capable of reaching Pyongyang and beyond in North Korea, then the temptation to develop a nuclear capacity would be far greater. The Koreans were trying to use the Nike-Hercules guidance system for their own missiles and probably could have launched a few toward the North. We pressured them to limit the range and retain less sophisticated guidance systems. Our military officers were less steady than the embassy in this effort. Some of them were more anxious to help the Koreans than I found wise.

I endorsed the Korean objective of developing a powerful and credible army, somewhat smaller and modern than the army of the late 1970s. The army was the main defense against North Korea; it deserved our maximum support. I approved many kinds of military supplies procured in the US - e.g. tanks and artillery. The kind of tanks became an issue. Were the Koreans getting their money's worth, or were we dumping our surplus older models while we equipped our troops with much more modern versions? I saw no problem with the Army's being equipped with short range missiles for defensive purposes.

My general approach to most questions about ROK military capabilities was: give the ROK everything that would improve its defensive capability; be wary of items that were more powerful than necessary for defense. I subscribed to the general American view that discouraged ROK acquisition of submarines, although I really didn't feel very strongly about that issue. I thought it was important for the ROK to have a strong coastal defense force to defend against formidable North Korean threats, so I favored construction of frigates as a response to the threat of North Korean PT boats. Whether the ROK needed bigger warships was a question I never really had to face. In addition I firmly supported the co-production of F-5Es and less eagerly the sale of F-16s to the Korean Air Force. I didn't think the latter was a very urgent matter and I was mildly concerned to avoid giving the Soviets a pretext to supply new fighters to the DPRK. Moreover, the ROK did not have the resources to buy and maintain many.

Much of my support came at the request of my military colleagues, which I gave gladly since I saw no valid objections to the introduction of these weapons systems into Korea. In general, I went along with the consensus that developed both in the Embassy and the Command. I think I was much stricter than anyone else, however, on the nuclear and missile issues.

While on this general subject, I should mention that the MAAG's dual role posed no problem. It was part of the embassy and part of the command as well. The MAAG chiefs - I think we had two while I was in Seoul - understood their delicate position and were always responsive to both the CINC and myself. That was very unlike Taiwan where the MAAG chief played games behind our back and got fired.

Now for other programs. I thought the USIA program was pretty good, comparing well with other operations I had seen, except perhaps the complex program in Japan that was endowed with some of the Agency's best talent. USIA was very helpful to me in the handling of the press. The PAO himself, his deputy, and the press attache were extremely responsive; they played a crucial role in helping me get our message out to the public, especially during the Kwangju crisis. They monitored the military broadcast facilities effectively. I always sensed they were doing their best for me, often very imaginatively.

Other USIA activities seem to have been handled alright, although I did not really have enough direct experience to judge them fairly. We had a branch PAO in Kwangju and later in Pusan. I found the pattern of concentrating our efforts in Seoul detrimental to our knowledge of what was going on in Korea as well as to getting our message spread to the people. Unfortunately, our establishment in Kwangju folded when the crisis arose there, and we had no one on the spot to observe what was going on. Although Pusan was an important center for political reasons as well as commercial ones, it was a major battle to get Washington to approve the establishment of a USIA Branch and later a consulate in Korea's second largest city.

My general impression is that we covered Korea quite well with our roving embassy officers and military presence in many parts of the country. Thanks to the logistic support that the command provided, I flew frequently to Pusan, Kwangju, Taegu and other major centers. I could go places and come back in one day. Sometimes I traveled by helicopter with the CINC but usually by car or train with Bill Clark or someone else from the political and economic sections. Most embassy officers traveled quite a bit; moreover, we sent people on long details to Pusan so that we could cover events in the south.

I made many public appearances - often with a speech. We never had to seek out invitations. I gave only a few major speeches, one to the Korea-America Association dealing with human rights and then perhaps four or five others. I wrote these myself to discuss my views on a major policy issue - relations with the PRC, North Korea, human rights. I wanted to engage the audience or Koreans in general in a dialogue on the themes of my speech. I always had the Department's approval. I recently re-read some of my speeches and thought they weren't bad.

I remember one in particular. I was anxious to foster more enlightened South Korean attitudes toward North Korea - just as I had encouraged objectivity in Taiwan with regard to the PRC. I didn't have in mind softening the ugly image of Kim Il Sung's regime, but rather to encourage South Koreans to seek better information about the North - more factual and less propagandistic. Their understanding about the north depended almost exclusively on information coming from the government which demonized the place. South Koreans would not even use the proper name for North Korea. As a modest effort toward greater objectivity, I gave a well-advertised speech discussing how both the US and the ROK might seek to ease tensions on the Peninsula. For the first time a US official had ever done so, I used the proper name for North Korea, "Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)," throughout the text. Despite some initial Cold War reflexes, the Department had approved the text, and my audience, a group assembled in Seoul by the Financial Times loved it because it was controversial. Paying little if any attention to the topic, the Korean language press made a big fuss over the terminology issue; President Park complained to me in person about my use of the term DPRK, admitting, however, that it was not the end of the world. I think President Kim Dae Jung was the first important Korean to take on the crazies who for decades exacerbated the anti-North Korean animus among South Koreans. Until recently, objectivity was often equated with being pro-North Korean.

A few words about President Park Chung Hee. I had met him and had talked to him, at least superficially, before being posted to Seoul. During my assignment in Korea we had many talks mostly about difficult subjects. While recognizing his major deficiencies, I was always an admirer of his nation building. In dealings with me he was modest, and he never berated me for delivering unpleasant messages. I had the impression he respected me for dealing with him in his own way. The real test of our relationship came at the Summit meeting in 1979. Although Park was incredibly difficult during his sessions with Carter, he appreciated what I and others had done for Korea, particularly on the troop withdrawal issue, and he was extremely responsive to my urgent requests for help to save the summit.

My assessment of Park Chung Hee does not differ much from the prevailing one. He had obvious faults as a leader, which became increasingly severe toward the end of his rule. By then he was running an abusive authoritarian regime and his days were numbered. In addition to increasing authoritarianism, the regime was crippled by Park's reliance on bad advice from his intelligence flunkies and the lack of constitutional arrangements for a peaceful succession. By 1979, his deficiencies were increasingly evident to all.

On the other hand, from the perspective of Korean misery in the 1950s and 1960s, Park Chung Hee contributed enormously to his country's progress. He was a visionary leader who brought about a remarkable advance in Korea's economy and security. He understood what the unsophisticated majority of the people wanted in those days - economic security and a sense of progress. He was shrewd and perceptive about the outer world, as one would expect from one of the world's longest surviving leaders. I remember his tour d'horizon with Dick Holbrooke in March 1979. When they got to our post war problems with Vietnam, Park described Vietnam as an "adolescent" country, an apt description with its implied criticism about the parent as well as the child.

Over the years, I observed evolution in Park's thinking, mostly in foreign relations. I leaned hard on him to improve relations with the PRC. He was still negative about a rapprochement even after we recognized the PRC; he worried about the impact on Taiwan. Yet, he was already more reasonable and thoughtful about China than in earlier days. He talked of a future shift in policy, and he welcomed my idea of visiting Beijing to promote some contact. The Chinese were eager to reciprocate. Naturally, his assassination disrupted all that thinking, but the evolution of Park's views made it easier for Chun Doo Hwan a few years later to adjust policies - shedding anti-communist rhetoric and engaging the PRC. Park understood the importance of economic development for his people's well being, and he appreciated the relationship between economics and politics. In historical terms, I consider him one of if not the greatest Korean leaders in recent centuries.

I stayed in Seoul until June 1981 - six months into the Reagan administration. It was Reagan's policy to break with Carter's approach and get along with Chun Doo Hwan. This posture ensured final success in our long effort to get Kim Dae Jung's death sentence commuted and brought Chun to the White House as President Reagan's first significant foreign visitor. Our acceptance of Chun's leadership was inevitable, but the way Reagan handled the change of policy troubled me, as I have explained in my book. I have never regretted the deal we struck over Kim Dae Jung. That was a conscious policy of two administrations. I do regret the speed and warmth of Reagan's embrace of Chun; it intensified suspicion and anger among the people of Kwangju. Nevertheless, if you read my messages, you will note that my own thinking had also evolved by this time. Once Chun was elected under the new constitution in 1981, there wasn't much we could do except to acknowledge reality. He was the duly elected leader of the Korean people, who had accommodated themselves to his rule. Although there was resentment among many Koreans, there was little support for radical opposition. I had to swallow hard as we accepted Chun in this role, because I had worked so hard for a more progressive outcome of the leadership crisis.

I did not buck the new administration and simply did the best job I could in my last six months. I offered my views whenever there was an opportunity. The new authorities correctly viewed me as a professional Foreign Service officer with no special allegiance to any political party. Although they offered to designate me for another important post, I decided for largely personal reasons to retire.

Final Remarks

I would like to end this oral history with a few thoughts about my Foreign Service career. I must say that it was an extraordinary experience. I entered the service during a creative period of US policy, and I witnessed some of the construction of the post-war international architecture. At the beginning of my service, I was exposed to many of the system's senior builders, even though I was very junior worker. There is no question that my first assignment to S/S greatly benefitted me. Subsequently I had good assignments, almost all proposed by the personnel system. I didn't seek most of my assignments, and I only balked at one which I finally accepted when ordered by Kissinger. I was very fortunate. Even at a relatively young age, I was assigned senior responsibilities several times. I think I met the challenge. I enjoyed my work, and I left the service of my own volition while my brain cells were still healthy.

There is another side to this positive view of the Foreign Service. I was lucky. The Foreign Service I knew and enjoyed is gone. Today, assignments based on "bids" seem haphazard; people more gifted than I do not get the choice of the kind of work I enjoyed; people who have jumped the career system through political connections get far more if not most of the key posts. Personnel gets far less attention, and the whole system offers much less support than it should. All that translates into a very demoralized Service. Along with many others, I face the dilemma of what to say to young people who are considering a Foreign Service career.

I have not done enough careful research to pontificate about the kinds of fundamental change that have eaten away the system in which I served. Even so, I want to sound off on a few points. On the policy side, while we haven't become an isolationist country, I now find a niggardly quality about our behavior that contrasts unfavorably with the generosity and engagement of the post-war years. We seem to have convinced ourselves that we don't need to pay a penny more than our statistical share of costs for maintenance of the world system. The trauma of Vietnam has left us so skittish about casualties in peace-keeping and peace-making that we often lack use of our military clout in managing conflict. We are not only mean spirited about paying our dues to the international system, but our boasts about free market competition skip over the extent of economic protectionism we still practice under various rubrics. I cannot see anyone coming on a white horse to save us from these and other sins, so I foresee a period of fumbling and frustration that will not be helped by the large number of Americans who voice contempt for anything "international."

The politicization of the system is now endemic, regardless of party in power. That is also very demoralizing to me as I go through the litany of my complaints. Senior officers do not get the respect they should; too many are shunted off into meaningless assignments; and very few get good embassies. It is true that the Foreign Service has always accommodated "outsiders" and benefitted from those who were skilled and influential. Now, however, political appointees are no longer outsiders; they dominate the system. Since assignments are a zero sum game, career people have far fewer opportunities, further engendering poor morale.

In the past officers might be assigned to as many as several ambassadorial posts during a long career. Today, the top notch people in DCM positions have diminishing prospects of a single ambassadorial posting, and some of the best are leaving while they are still young enough for a second career, which might be financially and intellectually more rewarding. That is a bad sign.

I have two final comments focused less directly on the Foreign Service. First, I am grateful that fate exposed me to some important aspects of world history in the making, particularly China. China has undergone huge change in my lifetime, and I had an unusual degree of exposure to this from many vantage points. As I have stated repeatedly in this account, I was critical about how long it took us to face up to realities. Needless to say, I was fascinated to be part of the process that finally broke through the forces of resistance. In the 1970s I hoped that the Nixon experience would open up a sustained new era with China; in fact it did, but US policy toward China remains peculiarly vulnerable to shifts in the political winds - romantic surges of absorption with things Chinese followed by displays of hostility toward China.

I have watched these swings all my life, beginning with my missionary parents in Beijing. I don't know why it is so difficult for us to have a steady relationship with China, reflecting a sensible consensus about what is important and what is less important in dealings between two large nations entangled by history. Driven by domestic forces, we spend too much time on Tibet, human rights, and Chinese domestic practices that are beyond our power to change. In the process we often obscure the importance of security, political, and economic considerations that call for our engagement with China - even when China is being very difficult. Second, I want to vent some criticism of our genuinely great country. The United States is an exceptional nation - in its origins, its institutions, its resources, its protected location, its dominance, and its hutzpa. We deserve credit for making immensely important decisions about the world's fate, if not always speedily at least before it was too late. Despite a lot of foolish rhetoric, we have followed basically sane policies. Yet, as I view things today, I am struck by the contrast between our self image as a progressive and democratic country leading the world with our understanding and power, and the quite different image seen by many others.

Even though we resent being told so, we frequently strike others as arrogant and self-centered. We don't even realize that some people abroad view us as a kind of "soft" imperial power, dominating large parts of the world through the invasive forces of economics, technology, and culture rather than by brute force. We tend to judge the world by our own rather distinctive standards, and we do this to an extraordinary degree. We have terrible problems understanding the values of other cultures or even appreciating that this fault is a major factor in our relations with others. We are highly ideological about our political and economic virtues; the world's most tenacious defenders of personal freedoms. We used to see ourselves as the bastion of the anti-communist movement; now we are fascinated with our role as the only surviving superpower and ingenious inventor of seamless economic success.

These unattractive tendencies, which I have exaggerated to make my point, may reflect our exceptional history and good fortune. We have been very fortunate to be big, rich, and geographically isolated in comparison to almost all other nations. Since the early period of our new republic, we have never been overrun by foreign invaders, we have never starved, we have always had healthy drafts of immigrants to do much of our work. That has saved us from the misery and humility so many other countries have experienced, but it may have generated some illusions about our accomplishments. In fact, our track record is not that great. Despite our revolutionary origin, we are slow to change; we have terrible disparities of income; and we are no less corrupt than many of the countries we castigate for this universal sin. We pay little attention to history. Our politicians and pundits constantly reinvent the wheel. We should perhaps be a little more modest about ourselves.

My negative comments need to be viewed in the context of the generally positive picture I have of the US. We do lots of things well, including the way we manage our foreign relations most of the time. I am proud to be an American. Being raised abroad and working abroad intensified my love of this country, but I think that we can do better.

So that sermon is the end of this long winded account of my long journey. As I said, it was great and I would do it all over again given an opportunity.

Annex A

Note-The following article by William H. Gleysteen, Jr. was written for the Japan Foundation and published in the Autumn 1995 issue of Kokusai Koryu Quarterly.

THE AMERICAN ROLE IN POST-WAR NORMALIZATION OF JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS: REFLECTIONS OF A DIPLOMAT

The Setting for American Involvement

Although quite aware of deep-seated problems in both countries, the United States pressed vigorously during the 1950s and 1960s for eventual normalization of relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) and, as a more immediate concern, for more friendly interaction of the two societies.

U.S. - American interests in this effort were quite apparent. Occupation of Japan and South Korea after World War II had demonstrated considerable American realism about Japan's - if not Korea's - strategic importance. But the combination of a spreading Cold War, a communist victory in China, and the strength of communist forces deployed south during the Korean War convinced Americans of the need to contain the communist countries by means of a broadly deployed, forward, American military presence in the West Pacific.

Japan was geographically key to this effort, while Korea was the front line where huge military forces still confronted each other under a fragile armistice. Hospitable basing arrangements for the U.S. were essential as were the freedom to maintain military mobility among the peripheral countries of East Asia. These were active concerns. For example, the sensitivities Americans originally encountered in operating from Japan during the Korean War seemed likely to continue handicapping operations under Peace Treaty arrangements unless the Japanese and South Koreans could be convinced that their fates were inter-connected. In short, it was the perception - often exaggerated - of a massive communist threat which motivated the Americans to offer good offices for the Japan-ROK normalization effort. As far as I can recall, economic considerations, so important today, played little role.

Korea - The view from Korea and Japan was rather different. When I arrived in Tokyo in the summer of 1958 Koreans still had first hand memories of Japanese colonial rule. These were usually bitter and reinforced by current knowledge of the way Koreans in Japan were treated as second class members of society. The South was a very poor, very undeveloped agricultural society devastated by the war. Exports were insignificant, and the country was heavily dependent on large amounts of American aid, which seemed ineffective - in contrast to Japan's rapid economic recovery. Americans talked foolishly and ignorantly of Korea as a "basket case" of foreign aid. Foreign criticism and ridicule reinforced Korean feelings of insecurity and resentment. Koreans secretly envied Japan's post-war success and openly resented the economic benefits Japan reaped without sacrifice from Korean War procurements.

In these circumstances Koreans developed an almost universal feeling that Japan owed their country an enormous debt for which it would have to pay huge compensation. To make matters worse, President Syngman Rhee deliberately stimulated anti-Japanese nationalism, sometimes with the same fervor he directed against his mortal enemies in the north. Fortunately, not all Koreans were so extreme, emotional, and backward looking about Japan. Many recognized that the Korean War had underscored Japan's importance to Korean security. Looking ahead, some saw Japan as an economic model, and they kept their resentments under restraint in hopes that Japan might someday be pressured and/or tempted to provide help for Korea's development. The most prominent of these was General Park Chung Hee who came to power through a military coup in 1961 in defiance of the U.S. and democratically elected leaders. His perceptiveness about Korea's needs for economic development as well as his strength were decisive in the ROK's agreement to the 1965 settlement.

Japan - Japanese views were complex because of sharply opposed attitudes toward defeat in the Pacific War, differing assessments of the communist threat, and the division of Korea into a zero sum situation of north versus South. Although all political parties accepted the restraints of Japan's pacifist constitution, elements associated with the Liberal Democratic Party sensed a real, if indirect, military threat from North Korea, resented the bullying posture of the Soviet Union, and recognized the complications posed by the PRC for the United States, especially in dealing with Taiwan. These views were reflected in the newly revised Security Treaty arrangements which allowed the United States to undergird its military presence in Korea from Japan. At the other extreme, the Socialist Party and the large left wing trade unions were unrelenting in their literalist interpretation of the constitution and militantly opposed to even indirect Japanese involvement in South Korea's defense. Whatever their personal views, these left wing Japanese collectively identified themselves spiritually with Communist China and North Korea, not the U.S. and South Korea.

This cleavage, which peaked with rioting and turmoil during Diet ratification of the Security Treaty in 1960, has virtually disappeared. But, for those of us physically present in the American Embassy in 1960, Japan seemed bitterly, almost violently, divided within itself over this defense issue. Combined with upheaval in Korea it was clearly the low point for our effort to reconcile Japan and the ROK.

Prevailing Japanese opinion about the Korean people and Japan's past behavior also complicated the process of rapprochement. While large numbers of Japanese felt remorse over their country's colonial occupation of Korea, some tried to defend Japan's 19th Century actions as "learned from the West" or "beneficial to the Koreans." Even some of the remorseful Japanese felt Japan had done considerable good for the Korea during the colonial era; others barely disguised or openly voiced doubts about Korea's capability to govern itself. These Japanese sentiments infuriated Koreans, compounding the problem of pervasive discrimination against the Korean minority in Japan.

Such was the bleak situation existing between our Japanese and Korean allies most of the time I was assigned to Tokyo. Nevertheless, although often feeling battered and discouraged, we kept up the pressure on Japan and Korea for a whole decade before the settlement was ratified in 1965.

The Issues

Fishing rights and ship seizures - More or less parallel with DPRK practice, the ROK claimed control over fishing in a vast sweep of international waters around Korea. While these control zones would not be judged completely outlandish by today's Law of the Sea, they were considered abusively large in an era when territorial waters were limited to 3 or 12 miles and fishing zones in international waters were generally not recognized. Moreover, the ROK established these zones unilaterally, included traditional Japanese fishing grounds, and enforced the zones with armed vessels supplied under U.S. military aid. Although the Japanese Government refused to recognize the ROK zones, it tried to keep its fishermen away from ROK territorial waters and generally concentrated in traditional fishing grounds.

During President Rhee's time, the Koreans seized large numbers of Japanese fishing vessels and imprisoned their crews, often for years, using their periodic release as leverage in the negotiations. The pattern of seizures was not only arbitrary, but also dangerous, because Japanese fishermen were usually under surveillance by vessels of Japan's maritime coastal force. Fortunately, even though these escorts were often faster and as well armed as the attacking Korean vessels, they were under orders to stop short of shooting confrontations.

The U.S. Government's position was unequivocal. We were opposed to seizures in international waters. After having checked facts with both sides, we would always make a strong protest in Seoul calling for release of the ship and crew. The protest would be reinforced in Washington, sometimes at a fairly high level. During the Rhee period I cannot recall a single instance where the Koreans responded promptly to our protest by releasing a ship and its crew. Even so, I suspect our efforts restrained Korean actions, and they were certainly appreciated by the Japanese. After Rhee was forced out of office, Korean policy moderated, even more so after Park came to power.

Claims and compensation - Compensation to Korea for losses and wrongs of the colonial period was, of course, the core issue in the long drawn out negotiations. ROK expectations were high, while Japan wished to keep the figure "realistic" (low), partly because of the direct precedent for North Korea and other Asian countries. Thus, to offset Korean demands Japan emphasized the great value of substantial Japanese assets left behind after the war. While my successors may have had better luck in the final stage of the negotiations, we had great difficulty during my assignment in assessing the nature and extent of these claims and demands. We had virtually no official documentation, and neither side was forthcoming in discussing a matter that might compromise their bargaining position. Nevertheless, since the issue was so central, I worked hard with Korean and Japanese officials in Tokyo as well as with my colleagues in Seoul to assemble a long and rather comprehensive report as one of my last acts before leaving Tokyo. My personal sympathies leaned toward the Korean position.

Treatment of Korean residents in Japan - Again this was an issue where Americans tended to side with the Koreans. Yet American influence was obviously limited in resolving largely domestic problems which stemmed from Japanese prejudices, Korean poverty, conservative regulatory machinery, and North/South Korean rivalry. Koreans residents, most of whom were forced to come to Japan, wanted the right to stay or leave, to choose Korean or Japanese citizenship, and in either case to enjoy full privileges of citizenship plus some extra privileges, particularly Korean language schools. Koreans were bitterly divided between leftists in Chosen Soren, totally identified with North Korea, and conservatives in Mindan, generally identified with South Korea and factions of the LDP (including some venal elements). We argued strongly with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and LDP figures for equality of treatment of these people, but we had no contact with the Japanese in actual control. American credibility regarding treatment of minorities was not, moreover, very high at this time.

Repatriation of Koreans to North Korea - Koreans in Japan who wished to return to South Korea had already done so or were relatively free to go back, but the pre-war and Korean War period prevented repatriation for those wanting to go to North Korea. Around 1959 the Japanese Government decided to facilitate such repatriation, causing a strongly negative reaction in the ROK, which alleged the probability of coercion by leftist Koreans if not Japanese authorities. Actually, South Korea was worried more that voluntary (or apparently voluntary) repatriation would redound to the credit of the communist regime in the North.

Coming at the height of the Cold War, ROK concerns triggered alarm in Washington, and we were ordered in Tokyo to try to stop the program or ensure that Japan included adequate safeguards. After much pulling and hauling between Tokyo, Seoul, and Washington, the Japanese Government arranged for careful interviews of each potential returnee by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Substantial numbers of Koreans returned to the DPRK from the port of Niigata without significant incident. South Korea lost a little face; North Korea gained some potentially troublesome new citizens; and we Americans took full credit for "the defense of freedom." Perhaps more involved in this affair than any other American, I must say I never had any fear that Japan would allow any forced departures. Yet, I also have no regrets about our actions, because Japan was protected by the special precautions we forced it to take.

How the United States Intervened

By the late 1950s the U.S. good offices effort was a significant feature of our policy, sometimes supported by the President himself and frequently by members of his cabinet in discussions with the Japanese and ROK governments about the virtues of cooperation and the dangers of confrontation. However, our Embassies in Tokyo and Seoul were the principal locus of our efforts. The ambassadors and their deputies were heavily engaged in both places, and they deserve much credit for any successes. Although assigned to the political section, I effectively worked directly under the ambassador on the Korean issue, and knowledge of this allowed me considerably higher contacts among Japanese and Korean officials and politicians than would have been otherwise possible for a junior officer. Most regular work, such as identifying problems, contacting officials, making suggestions or carrying out protests, and assessing progress, was done by me and my counterpart in Seoul. Periodic ambassadorial involvement in the entire range of issues helped reinforce our work and get necessary attention at the level of the Foreign Minister or occasionally Prime Minister.

Both embassies suffered from local bias, evident at all levels, including mine, but quite pronounced with some of the ambassadors and their deputies. We in Tokyo were relatively sympathetic to Japan, while it seemed to us that our colleagues in Seoul were often too soft on the Koreans. Although this was for the most part mild and to some extent amusing, it pains me to remember that it occasionally provoked some very ungentlemanly vitriol recorded in official messages between our posts. In a few instances I suspect it distorted Washington's basis for judgement - never dangerously - and more than once in Tokyo it was carried to the point where I felt I had to risk my career by directly confronting a superior about his veracity and civility. The fairness normally manifested by our Washington colleagues, combined with friendly interchanges of officers between Japan and Korea, kept this problem under control.

Conclusion

For a decade before the final Japan-ROK settlement in 1965, the United States played a commendable role, stabilizing and buffering tensions between Japan and Korea as well as serving as an "honest broker." In this sense, the effort I have described was never wasted, and it was often beneficial - at least in moderating extremist actions. Nevertheless, U.S. efforts were not decisive in moving the two countries toward the ultimate goal of fully normalized relations. The decisive factors in realizing this objective were probably: 1) growing Korean pessimism about the prospects for continued American aid; 2) new Korean awareness of Japan as a source of capital and technology as well as an appropriate model for rapid development; and 3) leaders on both sides sufficiently strong and enlightened to break through the impasse. Japanese governments had long wanted to reach agreement; Park Chung Hee was the first Korean leader who not only understood clearly how rapprochement with Japan could benefit Korea, but also had the strength to complete the process in the face of widespread protest. End of interview